**BONUS: PC SHOPPER'S PULLOUT CHECKLIST** 

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December 1995



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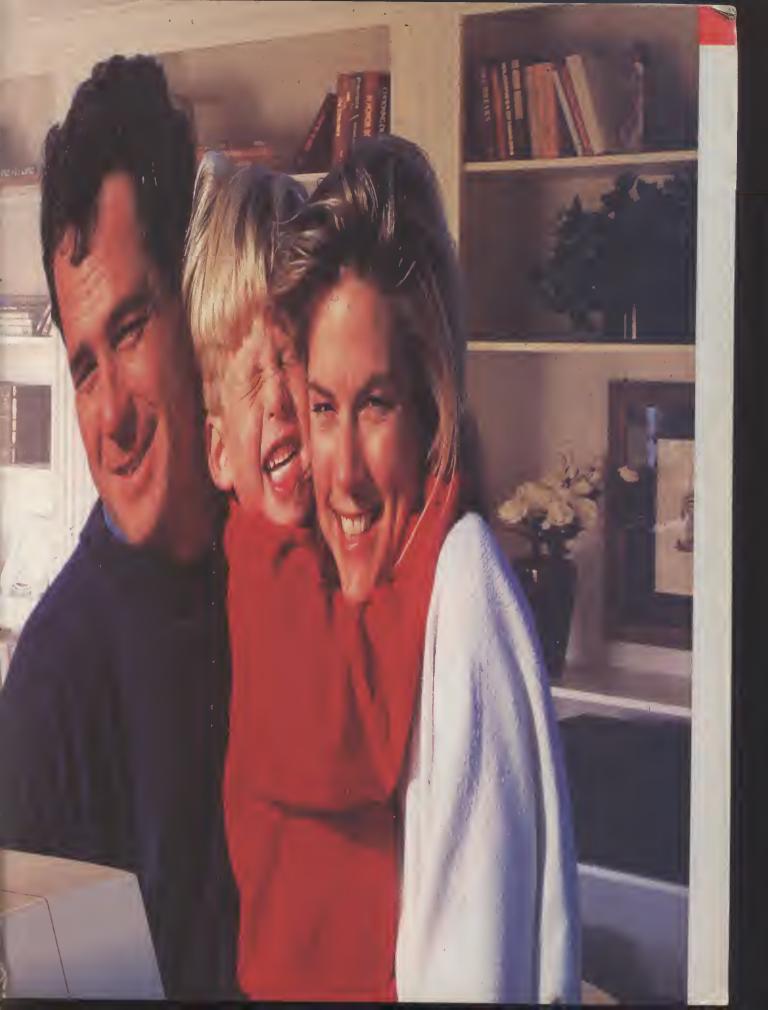
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- Everywhere USA Travel Guide
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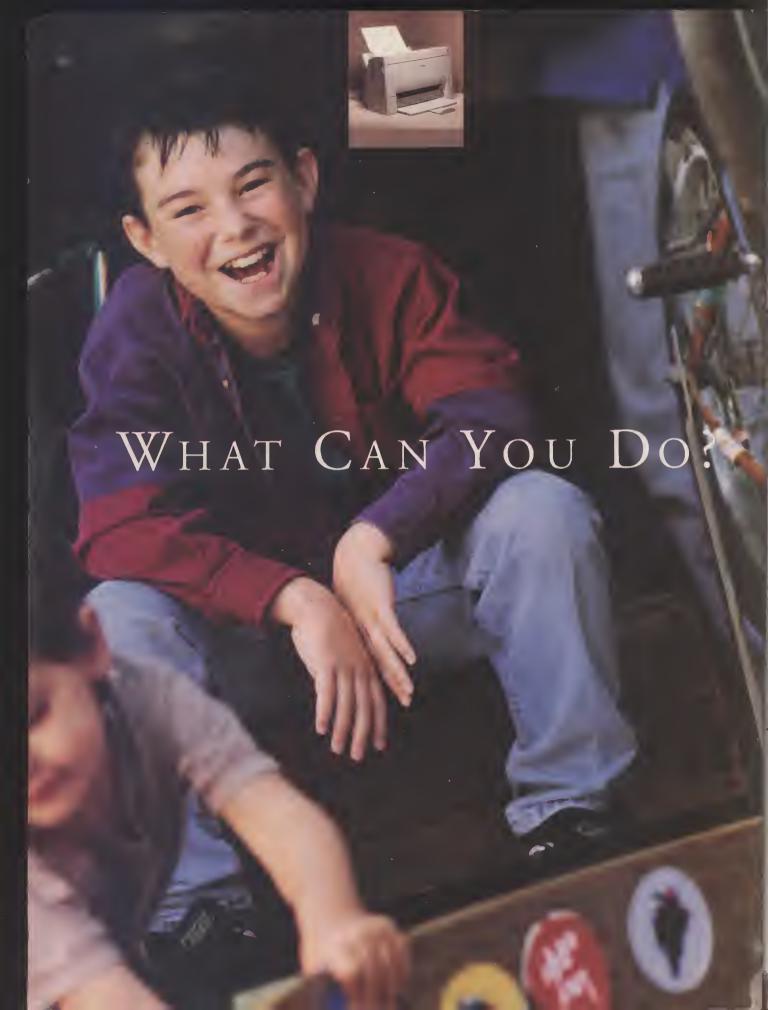


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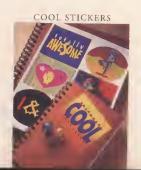
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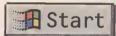
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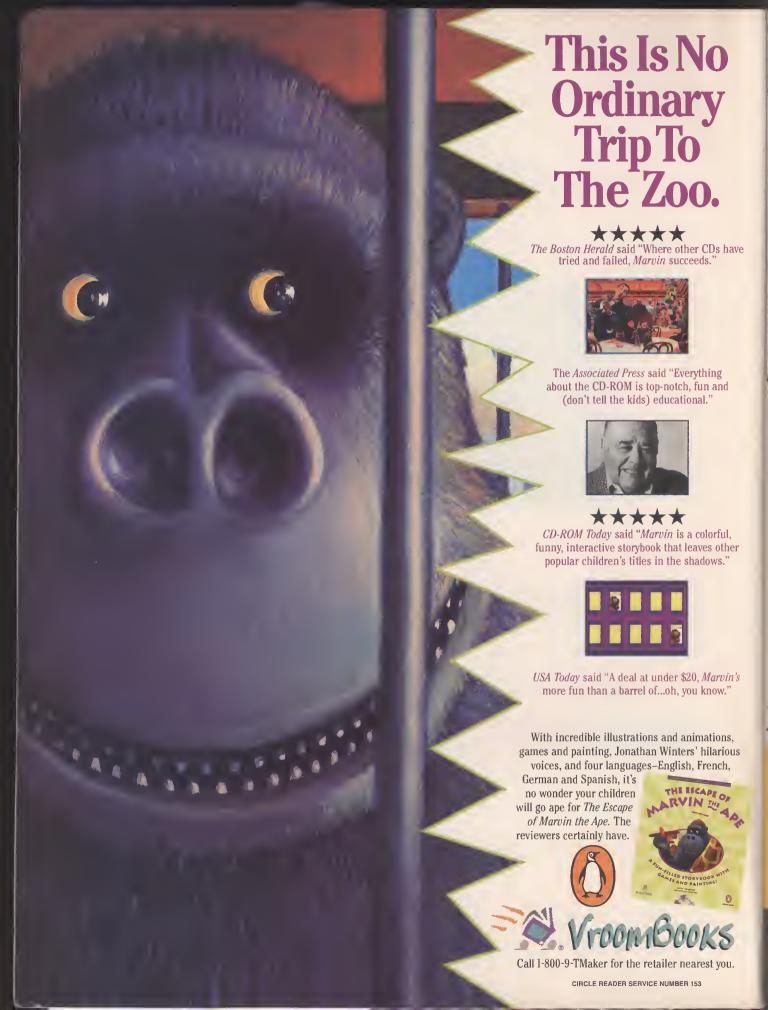


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# HOMEPC

**December 1995** vol.2, no.12 a cmp publication 8

the premier guide to

home computing

#### **FEATURES**

#### 123 Holiday gift guide

Hunting for perfect presents? Wrap up your search with 42 new computer-related gifts sure to make someone on your list smile, and the 43 tried-and-true programs that earned top marks from our reviewers in 1995 (see page 159). By Stephen Brewer



#### 171 Exclusive survey: the state of software support

Think you're the only one frustrated by programs that don't run? Think again. Readers give us an carful about an alarming number of woes. *By John Eckhouse* 



#### **184** Multimedia greetings

Instead of sending out the same old holiday eards this season, delight your loved once by sending best wishes that come alive on their PCs; we'll show you how to make them yourself with simple software. Or, find our greeting-card creations on-line and make them your own. By Carolyn Jabs

#### 207 Windows 95 tips: the Explorer files

Discover how to get the most out of the successor to Windows' File Manager and your hard drive will never again be uncharted territory. By Phillip Robinson

#### 224 Keeping the faith

Religion forums on the Internet and commercial on-line services put a modern twist on age-old spiritual quests. See how the anonymity and diversity of discussions in cyberspace arc leading many to examine their beliefs—and find a new level of inner peace. By Jeremy Schlosberg



#### 237 Just sew stories

Tag along with a quilt artist as she sizes up four pattern-making programs while fashioning a holiday wardrobe. By Anita Rabinoff-Goldman

#### A Visual Guide to Windows 95

Our three-part series concludes with a look at the new operating system's built-in performance boosters.



#### **UP FRONT**

23 From the Editor

**67 Letters** 

75 Ask Dr. PC

Video cards are a raw deal; new hard drive, new problems; my Filc Manager's hallucinating; taking a printer signal too lightly?

#### **BUYER'S GUIDE**

90 Hot Stuff!

Two lightweight Think-Pads do heavy roadwork;



Gump happens on CD-ROM; 3-D graphics for PC games; Web site adds dimension to audio CDs.

#### 99 Best Buys

Kids' favorites on CD-ROM for \$12.99 apiece; on-line guide hands out \$3,000 in coupons; free vaccine for Win 95 ills.

#### **257 Consumer Lab**

Find out how 11 top-line computers rated with our jury of consumers, who put them to the test under real-life conditions at home. Bonus: PC shopper's pullout guide.

#### **REVIEWS**



#### 379 Fun and Games

Mech Warrior 2 brings arcade blockbuster Battle Tech to the PC—and blows away the competition; Panic in the Park weaves Skee Ball, Whack-a-Mole and more into a mystery on the midway; All-Star Baseball sparkles like a diamond; Windows 95 puts the pedal to the metal in Al Unser Jr. Arcade Racing. Also: Under Pressure, Dagger's Rage, MegaMan X. Space Quest 6: The Spinal Frontier.

#### 393 Lifestyles + Learning

Julia Child and 16 top chefs serve up a CD-ROM menu filled with culinary delights; delve into NFL history with 75 Seasons. Plus: Everything Weather, Kana-kun, Tour of USA National Parks, more.



#### 411 Kid Raves



How to get to Sesame Street? Install three delightful new CD-ROMs; Casper: Brainy Book offers spirited fuu; Jack's House is a nice place to live, but kids didn't want to visit; Learn the Art of Magic mesmerizes youngsters; KidMail Connection tries to get kids on the Internet safely. Also: Etch-A-Sketch, Hollywood, more.

#### 431 Gear + Gadgets

If you're racing to find home-office machines, take five—Xerox comes up with a four-star multifunction machine; new PowerPC PowerBook is a chip off the old block; micro-Connect telephony card has some installation hangups; you'll be hard-pressed to find higher-quality video-capture images than Video Artist's. Plus: CH Pedals, SyQuest backup, Casio QV-10 digital camera.



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301 Nuts + Bolts

Just duet: Set up your PC as a recording studio.

### PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY

345 Financial Adviser

Take tax tips from your PC today to save in April.

353 Working at Home

Small-business marketing hits it big on the Net.

### ELECTRONIC COMMUNITIES

369 On-line Connections

See how on-line services treat *parents* when kids get out of line in cyberspace.

**524** The Cyber Ace

Tour six great Web sites.

482 Ad Index

#### HomePC On-line

America Online Events
Microsoft Answers
Win 95 Questions
Tues., Nov. 28, 8 p.m.

Kids' Software Tues., Dec. 5, 8 p.m.

Dr. PC's Clinic Tues., Dec. 12, 8 p.m.

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# from the editor

For years, my favorite holiday present was a turquoise princess-style dress with black-velvet trim and what seemed to me to be hundreds of black buttons down the front. It was a chore to fasten all those buttons, but at the time it was the most grown-up dress I'd ever owned, and I loved it.

computers through their paces. When the votes were tallied, we had a tie for first place: look inside to see which computers our jury selected and the reasons why, as well as their comments about their true-life out-of-box experiences with all the models they tried.

To help ensure you have all the information at your fingertips to make your shopping experience as efficient as possible, we've included a pullout checklist and guide so you can compare the specifications on the computers you're considering with our recommended configuration for peak perfor-

mance. Whether it's your first time shopping for a home com-

puter or you've spent more hours in computer stores than some PC salespeople, this card will come in handy.

And for those who aren't sure what all the eategories on the eard mean or why they matter, see our two-page, under-the-hood reference diagram (page 280), which illustrates and describes all the elements that make a PC tick.

No matter what kinds of gifts you're buying this season, a special present deserves a special card. Turn to page 184 to see how to make your own multimedia greetings—original holiday messages containing sound, video and text, which you can send to friends and relatives (who'll need their own eomputer to play them back). These greetings are surprisingly easy to make, although they do require a bit of time. If the holiday crunch becomes too hectic to let you tackle one vonrself, visit our forum on America Online (Keyword: homepc) and see the multimedia greetings contributing editor Carolyn Jabs made; you can even download one of our original creations and send it to someone special.

Just as computer-generated greeting cards can dress up your presents, pattern-making software can do wonders for your wardrobe if you're inclined to make your own clothes. (I admit the only thing I ever tried to sew ended up in my mother's rag bag.) This month, we invited an award-winning quilt artist to test the packages; you'll see what she stitched up for the holidays on page 237.

One thing's for sure, whether you're making sewing patterns or greeting cards. or giving software as gifts this holiday season—we all expect software to work properly. Yet it's difficult—if not impossible—to get some programs up and running on every

#### A new tradition: home computing for the holidays

We all want to find a gift that will make the people we care about just as happy, but it's rarely easy. Every year I have trouble



finding the perfect gift for my son, who has a taste for expensive consumer electronics equipment. My daughter is easier to satisfy—she's made it clear that "you ean never have too many pairs of boots."

If the loved ones on your list own a home computer, there are hundreds of great,

reasonably priced products that may fill the bill for you this season. Our Holiday Gift Guide (page 123) showeases 85 of the best, for gamers, golfers, gardeners, divers, art lovers, history buffs, movie makers, Internet surfers, travelers, trivia faus and kids of all ages. Ranging in price from \$8.95 for an Internet desk calendar to \$279 for a high-speed modem, there's something for every taste and budget.

And if this is the year you've decided to buy a computer—for yourself, your kids, your parents or your home business—check this issue for a revealing look at the computers you'll likely be considering at the store. In this month's Consumer Lab (page 257), 24 people from all walks of life and levels of computer experience put 11 top

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#### from the editor

PC. Is there anything more frustrating than having to tell your kids on Christmas morning that their new games won't work? Whom do you call for help? We asked more than 4,000 readers to tell us how they feel about software support and reliability. As our comprehensive report on our survey results (page 171) shows, manufacturers have their work cut out for them to deliver reliable software and respond promptly to calls for help. The tales of woe you'll read here put a human perspective on this shocking statistic: Consumers return 40 percent of

all CD-ROMs they buy.

Of course, one of the major selling points of Windows 95, the new operating system for PCs, is that it reduces the hassles of software installation. As part of our continuing coverage of the Microsoft product, which most shoppers will find installed on new PCs this season, we offer 20 tips for using Explorer, the powerful new tool for managing files (page 207). And look for the final installment of our three-part series of Windows 95 Visual Guides (following page 444), focusing on the system's built-in features to boost a computer's performance.

Meanwhile, if you need a spiritual boost amid all the hustle and bustle of the season, we look at how the worlds of technology and faith come together in cyberspace (page 224). Father Paul Keenan, who hosts weekly discussions on Prodigy, believes that the relative anonymity of on-line chat helps to break down many Americans' Iate-20th-century shyness about religion. Whatever your beliefs are, you can find an electronic community eager to disenss them on the Internet or the commercial on-line services.

We hope you enjoy this issue, our biggest ever. On behalf of all of us at HomePC, I wish you a healthy, happy holiday season. •

Ellen Pearlman

Ellen Pearlman. **Editor-in-Chief** 

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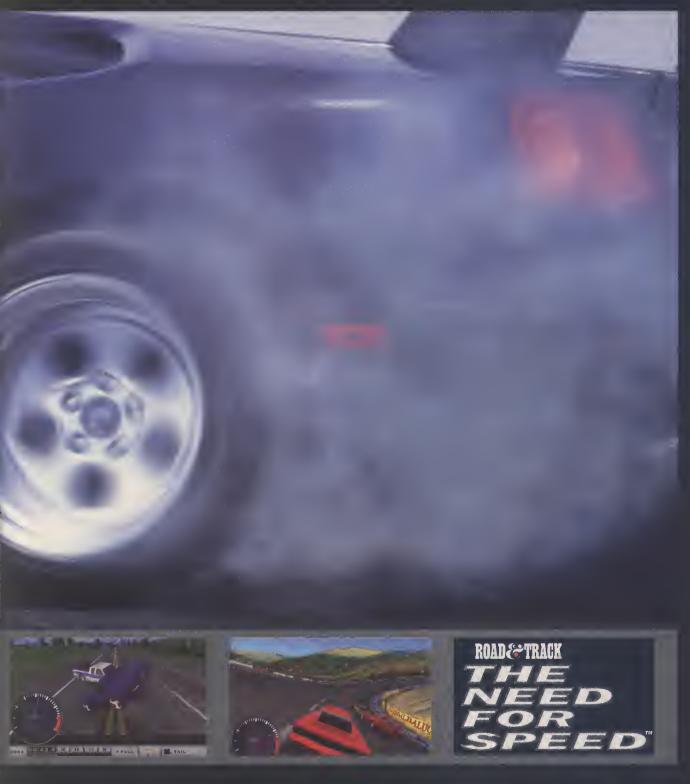
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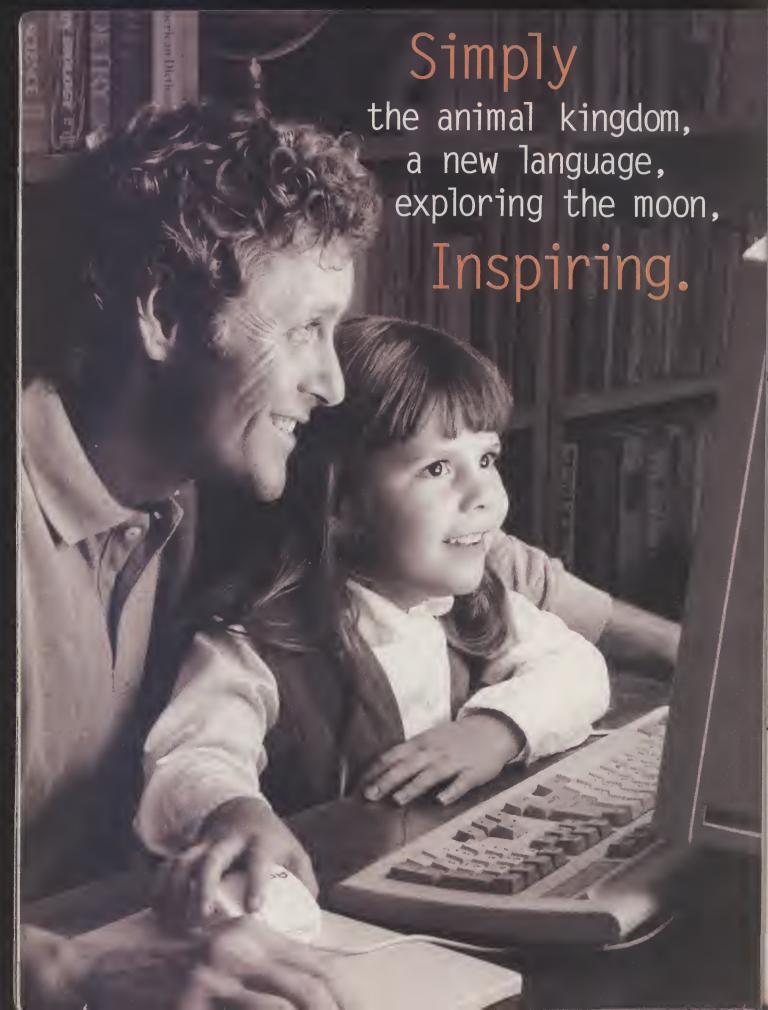
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Editorial telephone: (516) 562-7673

Dr. PC telephone: (500) DOC-18-1V

Fax: (516) 562-7007

Letters: HomePC 600 Community Drive Manhasset, NY 11030 ...Julie Cohen



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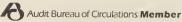
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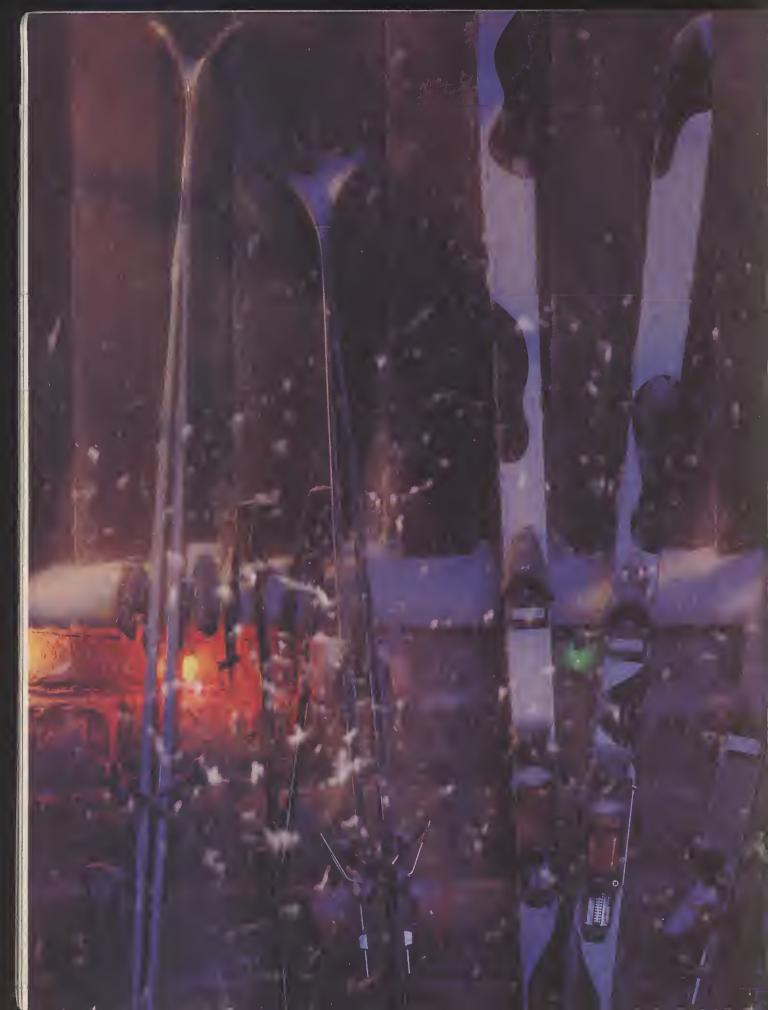
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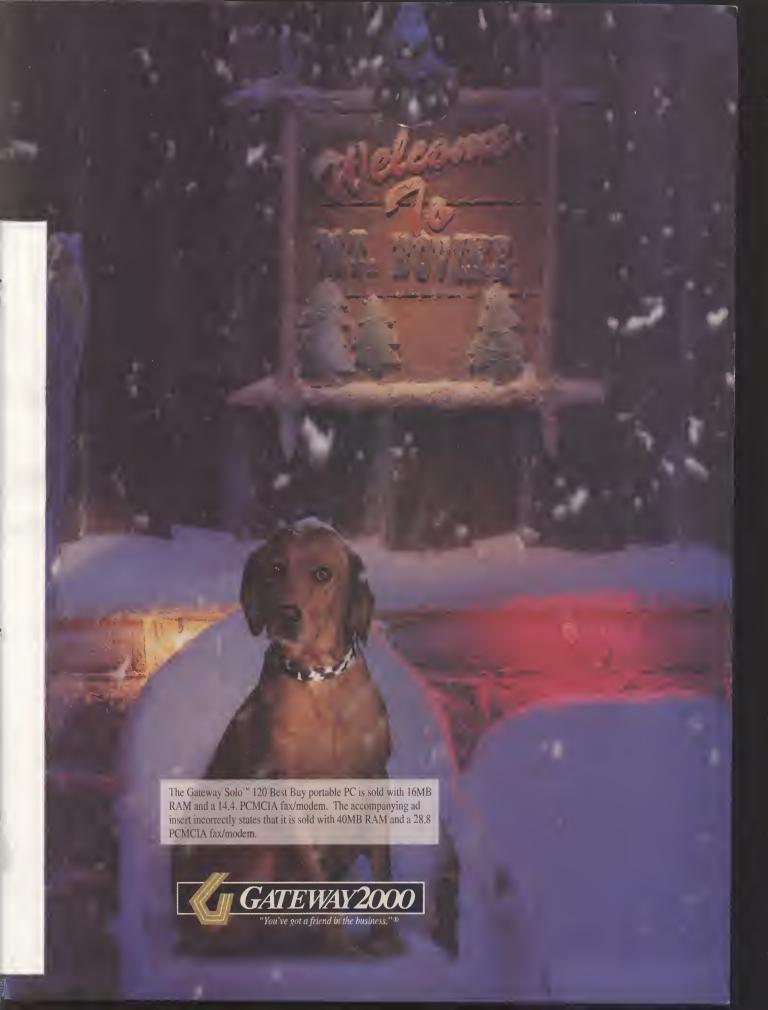
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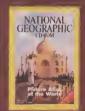
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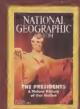
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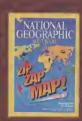


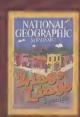


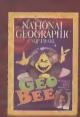


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Associate Publisher/West: Gene Burns 2800 Campus Drive, San Matco, CA 94403 415-525-4466; Fax: 415-525-4244

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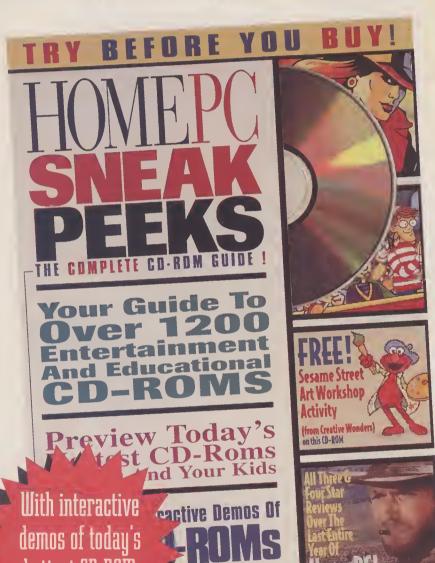
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CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 195

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This NFE Pro League Football CD-ROM game gives you more than just terrific graphics and football action. It has over three decades of football stats to allow you to create your own strategies, your own plays — even the weather. Hire players, fire players, play against the computer or against a friend via modem. Collegiate fans ean get the same thrills with All-American College Football. But we're warning you: Just make sure you have a spare shirt. Check out both games on the Internet at http://www.software.ibm.com To purchase, visit your local retailer or call 1 800 426-7235 (source code 5216).



#### letters



#### Win 95? I want HomePC '95

Thanks to *HomePC*, my Windows 95 installation was a breeze. The Nuts + Bolts section in your October issue (page 169) was just what I needed to get the new operating system up and running on our PC. The screen images and the descriptions made the installation casy and painless; I kept the magazine in front of my keyboard during the entire process, while the Microsoft documentation never left the box.

Your special section, A Visual Guide to Windows 95 (after page 222), was another valuable source of information. It went through the basics our family needed to know without getting too involved. We can dig deeper into Windows 95's features as we experiment on our own.

Have you considered putting out a year-end CD-ROM containing all the year's issues? It would be an indispensable source of information for your readers.

Bill Watkins Cincinnati, Ohio via the Internet

Editor's reply: While we're not planning such a disc this year, we have compiled an index of all the topics and products covered during 1995, so you can find what you're looking for quickly and easily in your back issues of HomePC. Our 1995 Editorial Index will be posted in the on-line version of this issue on America Online (Keyword: homepc) and the Internet's World Wide Web (http://techweb.cmp.com/hpc), or you can write us for a copy (see details on page 166).

#### PC (Preschool Curriculum)

I'm very grateful for Windows 95; my 2½-year-old son loves it. I videotaped him loading the first few disks of the software, and when he became impatient, I finished the installation.

Now, after making shortcuts to his favorite programs, I can't keep him off the computer. He's already learned how to use the keyboard and the mouse—and more than half the alphabet. If Windows 95 and good educational programs make computer use this easy for a toddler, what reason could adults have for not attempting to learn?

Millard E. Vandermark Hallstead, Pa.

#### **Prenatal software delivers**

As a medical professional, I was particularly interested in your recent feature "What To Expect When You're Expecting a Baby" (October, page 121). I found the article incisive and informative.



and I'm sure any expectant parent would as well. As more software producers use the tremendous potential of the CD-ROM format to educate as well as entertain, I am sure we will see more products such as those so intelligently reviewed in this story.

The purpose of the written word is to inform and/or amuse, and I

am heartened to note that *HomePC* does both in an intelligent, well-structured and readable manner. It stands out as a superior journalistic effort in a surfeit of similar, less able publications.

D.J. Roelike Columbia, Md. via America Online

#### In rural areas, BBSes rule

I've never written "fan mail" to a magazine before, but I must tell you that *HomePC* is probably the best computer publication I've come across—and I've picked up copies of every one I've seen in the stores. Yours is the only one I've subscribed to.

Regarding the letters that appeared in your September and October issues about the lack of local access numbers for commercial online services in some rural areas, here's another suggestion: There are local bulletin board services around the country that provide email, Internet access and more. I found one in my local calling area for \$9.95 a month, with 50 hours free and 50 cents for each additional hour. The service has no graphics for now, but hopes to add them in the future. Meanwhile, this BBS is much more affordable for me than any of the commercial services, since I'm not in an area served by their local numbers.

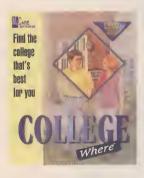
> Barbara Rosman Ellenton, Fla.

#### One tip deserves another

Your September article on desktop publishing ("Design Intervention," page 106) was very informative. I produce a small newsletter for a country-and-western dance group, and found several design tips that I was able to apply to the next issue of my publication.

I'm relatively new at computing and desktop publishing, but I'd like to pass on a suggestion that's worked for me regarding computing in general: When you get your first computer, learn one pro-

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#### letters

gram—and only one—as thoroughly as possible. I chose Microsoft Publisher to focus on. By finding out everything I could about that program, I reduced my learning curve for other software. This tip was given to me by a coworker who had spent a lot of time trying to learn everything at once when he got his first computer.

Larry E. Jacobson Eau Claire, Wis. via America Online

#### A few of my favorite things

I've been receiving *HomePC* since the first issue. Your Consumer Lab covering the major on-line services (September, page 111) gave me the courage I needed to finally try America Online. I also enjoy Ask Dr. PC, your many software reviews, and the sections covering personal productivity. *HomePC*'s format makes it very easy for any computer user to understand and enjoy the magazine.

Mike Keel Plover, Wis. via America Online

#### Insider's view

When I started reading your magazine, I worked for a company and did most of my computer work there. However, late last year I was laid off from my job and decided to start my own business. I followed voir Nuts + Bolts section's instructions to install new internal components in my PC and upgrade my memory. Then I decided I really needed a new computer, and have already upgraded the memory on it to 16 megabytes; I've also installed a new, faster fax/modem, and a 1.260-MB hard drive. I couldn't have done all this without your guidance. My friends are amazed that I dare even to take the cover off my PC.

I've enjoyed *HomePC* since the beginning, and sing your praises to anyone who will listen. I'm always giving out the subscription cards that come in each issue. Thanks!

Debra R. Jackson Pinehurst, N.C.

#### **Simple lessons**

I purchased a personal computer for myself and my 9-year-old son. Then, finding that our schedules didn't allow us to share the PC easily, I bought my son his own computer. I'm glad I did—the educational opportunities are endless, and it's an investment in his future.

HomePC is the best of all the computer magazines. It provides not only helpful tips, but information about new software programs for my son's enjoyment and education. I look forward to each issue; yours is the only PC magazine I find fun to read.

Susan Schaedle Memphis, Tenn.

#### From learning to earning

I really appreciate the way you talk to those of us who are somewhat new to computing, in terms we can learn from. I've been receiving HomePC for about six months and plan to continue to read it for years to come. You've helped me enormously to understand how to use my computer more effectively, and also how to fix many problems myself. In fact, because of your magazine. I've acquired the confidence to start my own home-based computer business.

J. Heather Racine, Wis.

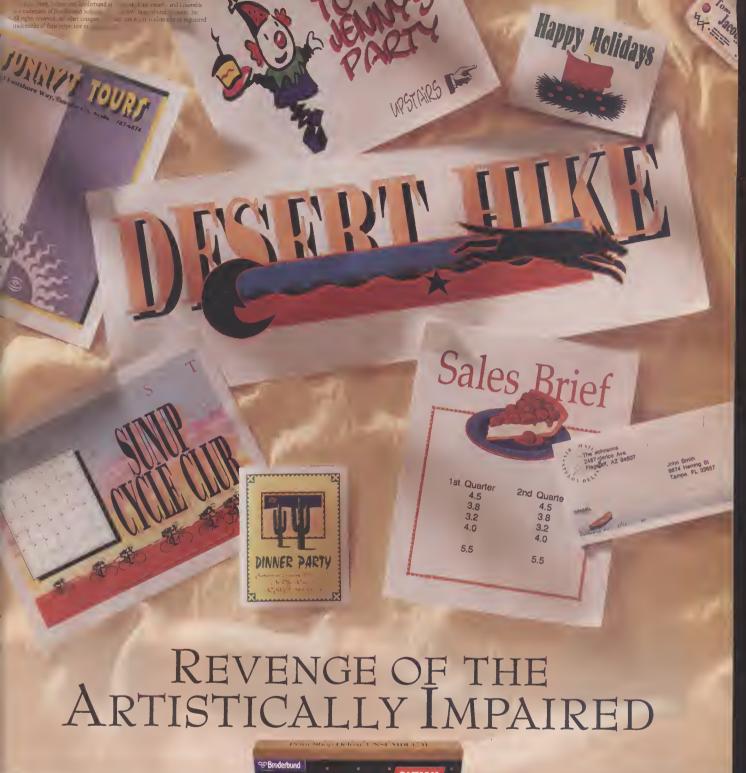
#### How to contact us:

We want to hear from you! Send your letters to:

Letters to the Editor HomePC 600 Community Drive Manhasset, NY 11030

You can also fax your comments to us at (516) 562-7007, or send electronic mail to HomePC on America Online or to homepc@aol.com using any other on-line service.

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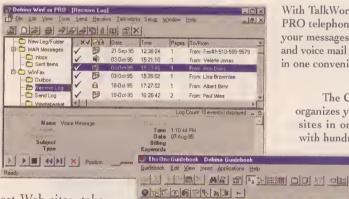
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The Cyberjack Guidebook organizes your favorite Internet sites in one place and comes with hundreds of popular sites.

aa.

while you work in another program. 🕿 All in all, it's the perfect communications solution for Windows 95. And if you can't send e-mail to Cleopatra yet, don't despair. After all, these long-distance relationships seldom work

out anyway.

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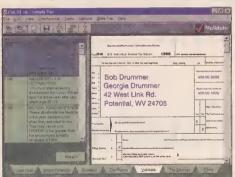
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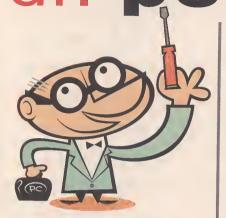
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l've been having problems
with my computer
ever since I replaced
my video card with a
model made by a dif-

#### Video card's a raw deal

ferent company. Neither card maker has been much help, and my PC's manufacturer has no idea what the problem is. Any clues about what I can do?

Sounds like there may be a tug-of-war under way between the memory your computer is using to run your programs and the memory your new video card needs to work properly. The new card may require sections of memory to be set aside for its exclusive use from a block referred to as upper memory.

A computer's motherboard and many PC cards include a chip containing a set of specific instructions called a basic input/output system (BIOS). These chips are relatively slow in computer terms, so your operating system often copies BIOS information into your PC's upper memory, where the processor can find it more quickly.

But if your programs have been dipping into that same memory pool, they may overwrite the BIOS instructions and cause a host of errors, such as fuzzy screen images, error messages and program missteps. Check your video card documentation (or call the manufacturer) to see if you need to set aside memory for the card's use, and if so, find out how to set things up to satisfy its hunger for upper memory.

If memory allocation isn't the issue, your best bet is to take your PC to a repair shop. Yes, this will cost you some money, but look on



the bright side: At least you'll be able to stop wrestling with your computer and your apparently unresponsive vendors.

I recently upgraded the hard drive in my computer.

starts, I get a message that reads "Can't find C:\scdemo\sc.exe in win.ini (or one of its

#### New, but not improved

components)." What did I do wrong and how can I fix it?

It sounds like the sc.exe program (or one of the files it needs) wasn't copied to your new hard drive during the upgrade. If you know what the sc.exe program is, reinstalling it should solve the problem you describe. But if you don't know what the program is and your PC is working OK, chances are you don't need it.

Even if you decide you don't need the program, Windows still thinks it does, and that's what's causing the error message. So you need to tell Windows to stop looking for it.

To do this, select Run from the pull-down File menu in Windows 3.1's Program Manager. A box will pop up asking you for the command you'd like Windows to run; type win.ini in the space allotted. (In Windows 95, you can get to the same box by clicking on the Start button and selecting Run from the pop-up menu.)

No matter what version of Windows you're using, the next steps are the same: You'll see a new window that lets you edit the win.ini file, which contains a list of programs that will run every time Windows starts. There'll be a line near the top of the file that begins with load= or run=, followed by C:\scdemo\sc.exe. This is the command that's causing your trouble;

it's telling Windows to try to run the sc.exe program every time you

turn on your computer.

Delete the offending characters after the equal sign. If any other program names appear on the line, leave them as they are (there will be a space between the C:\scdemo\sc.exe name and any other file names). When you're finished, make sure there are no spaces between the equal sign and any remaining program names, and only a single space between program listings if there are more than one on the line.

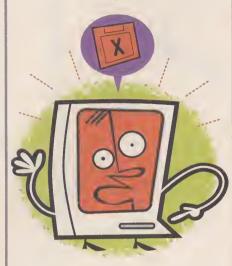
If C:\scdemo\sc.exe was the only file listed, you'll need to make sure there are no extra spaces following the equal sign. Use your arrow keys to move the cursor to the right margin, then use the backspace key to delete all the spaces until your cursor's right up against the equal sign (but don't delete that).

To save this settings file, select Save, then Exit, from the pulldown File menu. When you restart Windows, you should no longer

see the error message.

When I open File Manager in Windows 3.1, I see a message that says I don't have a disk in my floppy drive-but

you minimized the window for that drive, but you didn't close it when you were done. Even though that particular window may now be out of sight, Windows can't keep it out of mind because, technically, the window is still open. Each time File Manager loads, it dutifully tries to cheek the contents of the floppy drive so it can



update that window, resulting in the message vou've been seeing.

To end this futile search, open File Manager and double-click on the drive icon marked C:\. Don't be concerned with the window you'll see next; it's what's behind the window that's been causing your grief. To get the C:\ window out of the way, place your cursor on the lower right-hand corner of the window (the cursor will turn into an arrow when you've hit the correct spot). Hold down the

> mouse button and drag that corner up toward the left-hand

corner of your screen.

Once you've reduced the window size, you'll see an icon for the window in the lower left of your screen that displays the contents of your floppy drive, which is either A:\ or B:\. (If your view is obstructed by other windows depicting other drives, reduce their size as you did with the drive C:\ window above.)

Click once on the floppy-drive icon, and then select Close; File Manager will close that window and you'll be spared those unnecessary updates on your floppy drive when you start your computer in the future.

> Ever since I upgraded my PC to Windows 95, my

#### Win 95 savs 'game over'

DOS games haven't worked properly. What's going on?

Chances are that Windows 95 is using your old DOS CD-ROM drivers to access the CD-ROM drive instead of the new. 32-bit drivers that came with the operating system. And that can stack the deck against you when you sit down to play a DOS game like Aces Over Europe or Doom II.

During the Windows 95 upgrade process, many of the DOS and Windows hardware drivers (programs that let the operating system communicate with your hardware components) are replaced by faster, more efficient Windows 95 drivers. That process is designed to be an automatic part of the Windows 95 installation, but



in practice, some upgraders have found that not all the necessary drivers have been replaced. Often. it's the CD-ROM drivers that prove most troublesome.

Windows 3.1 programs generally run fine with older drivers. but DOS games have a lot of trouble,

#### Floppy drive's running on empty

I'm not looking for files on my floppy drive. Can I do anything to make this message go away?

Were you by any chance looking at a list of the files on a floppy disk recently? My guess is that you were, and then

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such as error messages and computer lockups. The solution is to upgrade to Windows 95 drivers, and the easiest way to do that is to contact the manufacturer of your CD-ROM drive, multimedia upgrade kit or PC, and obtain updated CD-ROM drivers for your particular hardware configuration. The manufacturer should also be able to give you instructions on installing the drivers.

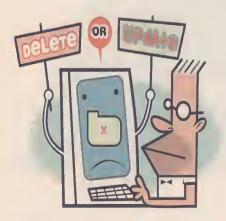
When I run the Microsoft Anti-

Virus program, I

#### Have I nailed a bad file?

message indicating
that a file has
changed, and that I
can either delete or
update it. What
should I do?

It all depends on which file has been changed and what you've been doing with your system lately. Most virus software, including AntiVirus, takes an inventory of key system and program files, and when one changes, it lets you know about it. If the file in question is system.ini, win.ini, auto-



exec.bat or config.sys and you've recently installed or removed a program, odds are that everything's fine. You can feel confident telling AntiVirus to go ahead and update its records of the file.

But if the file that's changed isn't one of the four mentioned above, or if you haven't added or deleted any programs recently, you should use AntiVirus's Detect and Clean command to help you locate and cure any viruses possibly lurking in your PC.

By the way, it's time you upgraded your virus-protection software. AntiVirus shipped in versions of Windows that are now pretty long in the tooth, and there are plenty of new viruses running around that it doesn't know about. I'd advise you to safeguard your computer with a newer virus protection program, such as the latest from Symantec or McAfee.

Each time my friend uses her laser printer with WordPerfect, the printer's buffer light

#### **Take laser signal lightly?**

comes on. Is this a warning of some sort?

Tell her to relax: The printer is operating properly. Unlike dot-matrix printers, which process pages character by character, laser printers treat each page as a single unit. To accomplish this, the printer needs to load the contents of an entire page into a storage area, known as a buffer, before it can print.

When the buffer light goes on or starts to blink, the printer's merely telling you it's loading a page of your document. Once the printer detects that it has a full page in its



buffer, it will spit out the page, and the buffer light will go out.

> When I doubleclick on the 386 Enhanced icon in my

**Windows 3.1 Control** 

#### Must I remember this?

Panel, I see something called "Virtual Memory." What kind of memory is this?

Virtual memory is just like virtual reality—it appears to be there, even though it's really not. In your case, the PC is using excess hard disk space to simulate additional computer memory when it runs out of the real thing.

Here's a quick primer on computer storage terms: Memory, the common term for random access memory (RAM), is where your computer keeps items that it's handling at a given time, most notably the key components of the programs you're currently running. Your computer stores items it doesn't need right away, such as files and programs you're not working with at the moment, on the hard disk.

Both RAM and hard disk space are measured in megabytes (MB), but there are big differences between them. One is access speed: It's much faster to pull something





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PaperPort Vx fits between your keyboard and monitor, and installation couldn't be easier. Just plug it into a serial or parallel port—no cards required.













#### Award-winning.

PaperPort has won the most prestigious awards for its usability and design.





PAPERPORT

# A COUPLE OF THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN YOU BUY THAT NEW COMPUTER.



When you choose a computer system for your

home, don't overlook the most obvious component: The monitor. Computer companies will frequently include a low-quality monitor. That might make a complete system easier to buy, but a lot harder to live with.

If you chose your monitor as carefully as the

rest of your system, it would probably look like the

Nokia 17" 447L multimedia monitor. With a diagonally-measured viewing area of 15.75", a .28 mm dot pitch flat square tube and maximum resolution of 1024 x 768 at a refresh rate of 75 Hz, the 447L is the caliber of display usually enjoyed by graphics



professionals. In fact, Nokias have been named a





Hame Office Camputing Magazine Best Buy. The 447L feotures front panel salid-state screen adjustments and sterea pawered speakers under the bezel—ideal for the multimedia software that is naw porticularly popular with families. Which brings us to the mast impartant cansideration.

Children are spending hours with their yaung eyes just inches awoy fram manitors. Here the 447L shaws its reol value. Its

emissions contral has earned Sweden's MPRII
certification—one af the strictest standards in the
warld. Its ergonamics reduce eyestroin and fotigue,

MAXIMUM REFRESH RATE FOR EACH RESOLUTION			
RESOLUTION	640x480	800x600	1024x768
447L-17°	100Hz	85Hz	76Hz

and demonstrate real user-sensitivity.\*

The overage viewing distance of a camputer manitor is eighteen inches. Remember what you learned

obout sitting clase to the TV?



The environmental values af Finland (where the 447L is mode)



are evident everywhere: From

Nokio mokes speakers for German luxury cors, so adding them to the 447L was easy.

in the moterials (which eliminates harmful gases)

right dawn ta using recycled poper in the packaging. Not anly is the 447L friendlier ta users, it con even get alang

with the decar in your hame -

thonks to the EuroPolette™ chaice of colors

And with its suggested retail price of \$699\*\*, it wan't even disturb the family budget.

Sa when you buy your camputer system, laak ot the manitor with the eyes of a child. And the 447L will be your clear choice. Coll 1.800.BY NOKIA far the location of the dealer nearest you.









May 1995 Nokia Valuegraph 447l



June 1995 Nokia Valuegraph 447



June 1995 Nokia Valuearaph 4471

from memory than to retrieve it from the hard disk. Another is cost: RAM typically sets you back about \$40 per megabyte, while disk space averages a few pennics

per megabyte.

When your operating system uses disk space as virtual memory to run a RAM-hungry program, it sets aside a chunk of unused disk space, often as much as 20 or 40 MB, and uses it to store active programs and data that it knows it needs to access infrequently (which to a computer might mean only once a second). Information it needs more often remains in RAM. The process of moving information back and forth between a PC's virtual and real memory is called "swapping."

For example, say your PC has + MB of RAM to load Windows, launch a program such as Microsoft Word, then open a large document file. To accomplish all these tasks, your computer would use the + MB of RAM, then swap an additional 10 or 15 MB of information out to virtual memory on the hard disk. Swapping lets your computer do what you asked, but it will be slow, since retrieving items from the hard drive takes longer than accessing

items from memory.

If you want to increase the speed of your computer, you can do so easily by adding RAM. In our example above, increasing the amount of RAM to 16 MB could eliminate the need to swap data out to the disk, making performance quite snappy.

I just bought a
Star Trek CDROM; the manufactur-

In order to boldly go where no one has gone before, you sometimes have to leave a bit of the past behind. In this case, the high-resolution graphics required by your Star Trek CD-ROM means that the best way to tag along on the voyages of the *Enterprise* crew is to upgrade your video memory.



Video memory is a chip on your video card that stores the graphics you see on your computer screen. The more elements—colors and pixels—that make up your screen images, the crisper those images will be. But the more elements you have—and the galaxies the *Euter-prise* visits have plenty—the more storage capacity your video card needs, hence the upgrade advice.

Say you want to display 256 colors at a screen resolution of 1,024 by 768 pixels, which is a very crisp resolution. You'll need more than 786 KB of video memory. But with the 512 KB you cur-

rently have, the highest resolution you can possibly get with 256 colors is

800 by 600, which will look no-

ticeably grainy.

So no. you don't absolutely have to upgrade, but if you don't, odds are you'll be disappointed when you see an *Enterprise* that's far from starship-shape.

None of my fonts show up in Microsoft Works

#### **Fonts' Works stoppage**

2.0, although they're available in all my other programs. Can you help?

The problem is that you have too many fonts for Works 2.0 to handle. I'm guessing that you (or a program you installed) recently added fonts that exceed Works 2.0's capacity.

I can't tell you exactly how far the program's font capacity can stretch, because that figure is extremely variable, depending on factors ranging from the number of sizes and styles for each particular font to the length of your fonts' names (the shorter they are, the more fonts you'll fit). But since you've clearly got too many loaded on your system, I suggest you remove some of the fonts you rarely use, which will most likely solve your problem.

To remove the fonts, go into the Windows Control Panel and double-click on the Fonts icon to list all the fonts you've got. Select those you don't use, click on Remove, then on Yes to take them out of the



Windows roster (but don't delete the fonts from the disk). If you need all your fonts, it may be worth the \$45 to \$70 it costs to upgrade to a more recent version of Microsoft Works, which won't plague you with the problem you describe.

#### I can't see the CD-Romulans!

er says I need to boost
my video memory from
512 KB to 1 MB to play
it. Is that true?



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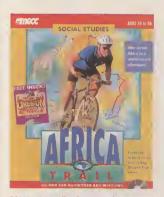
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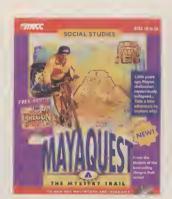
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CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 64

Each time I run Windows 3.1, all of my 27 program

windows open. I'm

computer, all the time vou've just spent closing those windows and arranging your desktop comes to naught because you haven't instructed Windows to save your current desktop environment.

All you need to do the next

time you're working in Windows is set up your desktop just

the way you like it, then go to the pull-down Options menu in Program Manager and take a look at the menu item labeled Save Settings on Exit. You'll see that there's no check mark next to this option, which explains why your settings haven't been carrying over from one computing session to the next.

To make sure your settings stay put from now on, simply select the Save Settings on Exit option. Then, if you drop down the Options menu again, you'll see a check mark next to that choice. And the next time you start Windows, your desktop should appear exactly as it did when you last exited it. •

Dr. PC was assisted this month by Andy Feibus, Michele K. Hugelmeyer and Chris Oggerino.

Do you have a question for Dr. PC? You can mail it to Ask Dr. PC. HomePC, 600 Community Drive, Manhasset, NY 11030; phone it in to S00-DOC-IS-IN; fax it to (516) 562-7007; or post it to the doctor at HomePC ou America Online.

#### Windows sign: 'We never close'

tired of closing them only to have them reopen again. Is there a way to close the windows and keep them shut?

Absolutely. In fact, the problem you describe is quite common, and it can be solved very easily.

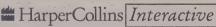
Whenever you turn off your



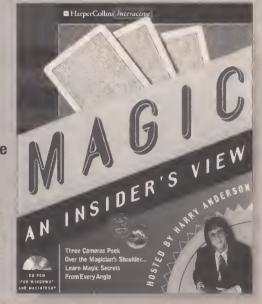
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## Pentium<sup>®</sup> OverDrive<sup>®</sup> processor up

Pentium OverDrive processor now available.

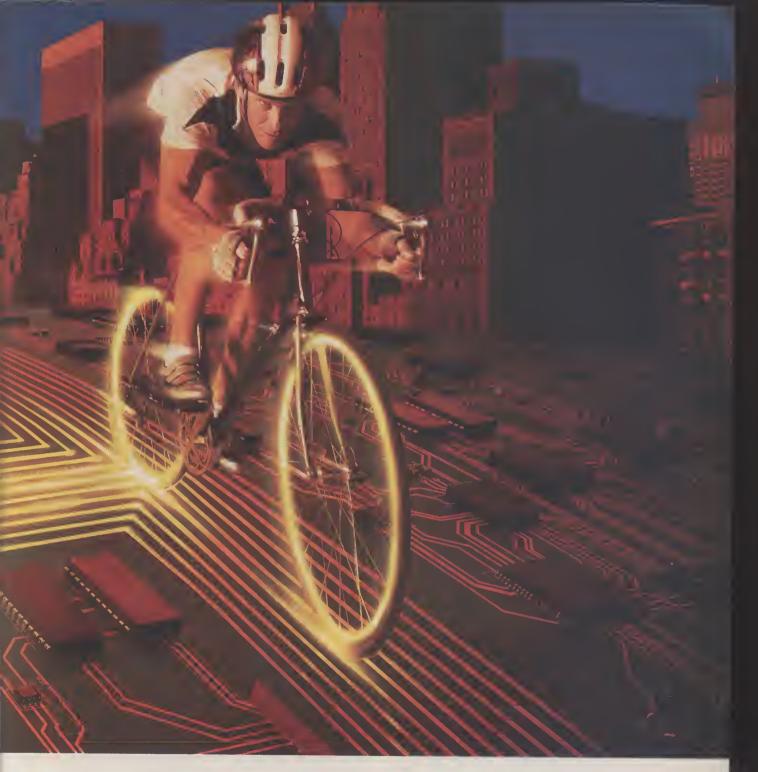


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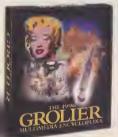
connections to special interest forums, popular publications and databases, chat rooms and more. In addition, The 1996

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## hot Stuff!

COOL PRODUCTS AND THE LATEST TRENDS

BY THE EDITORS OF HOMEPC

#### Two lightweight contenders do some heavy roadwork



#### Hanks for the memories

Mama probably never knew the magic of multimedia, but she'd likely compare Forrest Gump—Music, Artists and Times (\$39.95, Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) to a box of chocolates anyway: You never know what you're going to get. You can choose from the music of the Gump era, video clips from the Oscar-winning film highlighting the tracks, vintage performance clips, interviews with many of the musicians (including Joan Baez, Jackson Browne and David Crosby) and background on the artists.

GTE Entertainment, (800) 483-8639, (619) 431-8801. Circle #412





#### **Anywhere I wander, anywhere I ROM**

Designed for easy installation and operation, the CyberMan CD (\$499.95, Windows) expertly delivers PC sound and video for people on the go. It's the first portable PCMCIA CD-ROM drive to comply with the MPC-2 standard, and you don't need to hook it up to a SCSI adapter or parallel-port interface. Just plug in the Type II PCMCIA card, load the self-installing software, and the double-speed CD-ROM drive is ready to support your favorite multimedia discs, complete with 16-bit wavetable sound. If you want a little traveling music, the CyberMan also plays audio CDs.

PacRim, (800) 453-7933, (602) 813-3288. Circle #413

#### **Philharmonic convergence**

Give Tchaikovsky's holiday-season classic a '90s spin with The Nutcracker Suite CD-ROM (\$49.95, Windows, Macintosh). The animated adaptation features the Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, original art, a quiz, and six areas to explore, including The Story (the narrated tale accompanied by text), Read and Repeat (where kids can point-and-click on characters to hear them speak), and Explanation (background on the composer and his craft).

Dynaware, (800) 280-6108, (415) 696-8333. Circle #414



#### **Giving games a depth charge**

PC graphics take on an extra dimension with the 3D Blaster (\$349, Windows, Windows 95) from Creative Labs, maker of the popular Sound Blaster sound cards. The 3D Blaster promises to bring arcade-style visuals to your computer screen. The Plug-and-Play-compatible add-in card enhances 486- and Pentiumbased PCs that have a standard VESA Local Bus, and delivers 16-bit, 640-by-480 graphics for an exciting gaming environment. Want proof? Creative Labs invites you to start with the six showy CD-ROMs it includes in the kit.

Creative Labs, (800) 998-5227, (408) 428-6600. Circle #415



#### h American Ski Area Screen Saver SkiData 468-4111 9,100/hr 572-3939 21.000/h 382-788 478-4888 Featuring Trail Maps From Trail Market Ski Reson 995-5900 932-4211 943-8309 968-2100 634-3771 422-3261 244-6665 831-8810 742-2222

#### Stop working, and it's all downhill

The North American Ski Area Screen Saver (\$19.95, Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) provides hot shots of some of the continent's coolest ski areas. The disc features 25 resorts and delivers vital vacation information. Just click on any resort name on the Windows wallpaper to call up phone numbers, annual snow reports, mountain statistics and an Internet address. A printed version of the SkiData Guide comes with the software, or check out Cylogic's Internet site (http://www.lucky-dog.com/skidata) for instant links to the slopes.

Cylogic, (800) 295-6442, (206) 283-8800. Circle #416

#### **Rolling thunder**

The TrackMan Marble trackball (\$99, Windows) puts reliability, performance and comfort in the palm of your hand. The trackball offers three programmable buttons, and its special sensing technology replaces the conventional system of rollers and wheels with a laser-like beam. The method is designed to improve precision and eliminate performance problems caused by dust and dirt. Available for serial or mouse ports, the TrackMan is also ready for Plug-and-Play.

Logitech, (800) 231-7717, (510) 795-8500. Circle #417





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magic of Stonekeep. As you traverse dark corridors, treacherous subterranean sewers and enter the realms of fairies, magic and the living dead, you'll be drawn into a and more consuming than anything you've ever imagined. 

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Stonekeep lives up of game we've always wanted to produce and the kind of game we've always wanted play. It looks fantastic, sounds incredible and it tells a great story. It's also a heck of a lot of fun... and after all, isn't that what games are all about?

heart-pounding music and 3-D effects will draw you into Full-screen graphics let you feel the full intensity strong, slightly agile, and healthy. His skill with hammer is good and he is skilled in axe and shield.

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# **Read your CDs' on-liner notes**

With Voyager CDLink, some of your favorite audio CDs become multimedia extravaganzas. At the Web site <a href="http://www.voyagerco.com/cdlink">http://www.voyagerco.com/cdlink</a>, you can merge text and images with your music. Scan the site for titles and artists in your CD collection—there's an eclectic list waiting for you, including John Coltrane, the Beatles and Nirvana—then pop your chosen disc into your CD-ROM drive. Click on the title listed on screen, and let the music play—along with funky graphics, liner notes keyed to specific passages, and other enhancements.

Voyager, (800) 446-2001, (212) 431-5199. Circle #418



# ASMOV'S ASMOV'S STATES OF THE PROJECT OF THE PROJ

# **Interplanetary craft**

The sun, the moon and the stars are all made more down-to-earth in Isaac Asimov's Library of the Universe (\$39.95 for the seven-disc series, \$14.95 each; Windows, Macintosh). The CD-ROMs explore theories popularized by Asimov, considered by many to be the father of science fiction, in his numerous writings. There's plenty that's novel—and factual—about the topics covered here, which include supernovas, asteroids and the planetary path of Voyager 2. Taken together, the multimedia exploration leaves no moon rock unturned.

Zane Publishing, (800) 769-3723, (214) 746-5555. Circle #419

# A notebook add-on (literally)

Entering numerical data is tedious enough, but it's worse if you're using a notebook PC that has numbers only above the alphabet keys. Two new keypads are made to alleviate number-crunching cramps: The Micropad 627 (\$85, Windows) connects to your PC's serial port; its pass-through interface lets you run a second serial device—say, a mouse—at the same time. The AddPoInt (\$120, Windows; \$128, Macintosh) features the same keypad, plus a Glide-Point touchpad for easy cursor movement.

Genoration, (800) 822-4333, (714) 833-3355. Circle #420 •



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# shop for milk and crackers at 133MHz.

The Acer® Aspire™ Minitower lets me work at home, so I can Aspire. To Do More.

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a 28.8kbps fax modem<sup>†</sup> so my son and I can shop online

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BY JENNIFER TRIVERIO

# **Call it Good Mousekeeping**

"Expert Selected, Kid Tested, and Parent Approved." That's the promise KidSoft makes for KidSoft Select, a series of children's CD-ROM favorites now priced at just \$12.99 each.

The first batch of KidSoft Select titles, which are presented under the Good Housekeeping magazine banner, includes previously released Windows 3.1 and DOS programs from a variety of manufacturers. Each disc meets standards for quality and entertainment and educational value; all programs chosen for the series were evaluated by a select panel of teachers, kids and parents, who believe children not only will love the software, but will learn from it, too.

The inaugural list of 35 titles, sold exclusively in software and toy stores, includes Bug Adventure, Gus Goes to Cybertown and The Incredible Toon Machine.

KidSoft, (800) 354-6150, (408) 255-3434. Circle #404

# **Net worth: shop (and save) on-line**

Everyone loves a bargain this time of year—it's the crowds we could do without. To skip the fevered frenzy of one-day sales but still get deep discounts, don't

stand in line; go on-line instead.

Shopping on the Internet and Beyond! (\$19.99) will help you sniff out savings on everything

from perfume (can you turn up your nose at 40 percent off Shalimar?) to coffee (check out steaming deals on Amaretto Royale and Viennese Cinnamon at The Baltimore Coffee & Tea Company). The 1,000 entries feature company and product descriptions, electronic addresses, and price ranges (including shipping fees).

The guide even offers a few bargains of its own: "Exclusive Deal" coupons worth more than \$3,000 are scattered throughout, making it the definitive handbook for cybermall-rats around the world.

The Coriolis Group, (800) 410-0192, (602) 483-0192. Circle #405

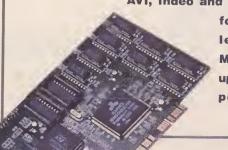
# **Bargain Matinee shows PC movies**

If you love big-screen entertainment, \$199 will get you into the Matinee—a 64-bit PCI multimedia-accelerator card that provides sizzling graphics and full-motion, VCR-quality video.

Matinee supports MPEG, AVI, Indeo and CinePak video

> formats, and it lets you view MPEG videos at up to 30 frames per second (a





# best buys

Pentium processor is recommended for the smoothest playback), with options to resize the picture and zoom in and out. The card holds 1 megabyte (MB) of DRAM (upgradable to 2 MB).

You can check out your PC's enhanced performance with an included CD-ROM, which features Multimedia Shakespeare: As You Like It and Multimedia Space Explorer.

Alaris, (800) 317-2348, (510) 770-5700, Circle #406

# \$99 makes Power Mac chipper

Power Macintosh owners who feel a need for more speed but don't want to cash in their chips might find an affordable answer in Speed Doubler.

Developed by Connectix, which makes the popular memory enhancer RAM Doubler, Speed Doubler (\$99) emulates a processor upgrade, but delivers its benefits at a much lower price.

The Speed Doubler examines how your Power Mac uses its RAM and allocates a share for the disk cache, where RAM is set aside to store information recently

read from the hard drive. If the data is needed again, it's retrieved from the RAM much more quickly than it would be from the hard drive.

The Speed Doubler emulator also acts like a 680X0 processor, helping older programs—which tend to be sluggish on the Power Mac—run with more pep. And it accelerates the Mac's Finder feature, letting you copy several files at once, or

# SPEED DOUBLER

# **Top of the Charts**

The best-selling software for multimedia PCs and Macintosh systems

PCs and Macintosh systems
Education
Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing
2 Math Blaster: In Search of Spot
3 Disney's Animated StoryBook: The Lion King
Disney Interactive
4 SimTown*
5 3 Ft. 6 Pak
Sirius Publishing
6 Reader Rabbit 1
Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?Broderbund Software
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Softkey International
The Aladdin Activity Center
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3 Print Shop Deluxe CD Ensemble
Publisher
5 Quicken Family Lawyer
6 3-D Home Architect*
Street Atlas USA
PrintMaster Gold CD Bonus Pack
Micrologic
Automap Road Atlas*

**Automap Road Atlas\*** 

Source: PC Data (for August 1995)

**Family Tree Maker Deluxe** 

......Banuer Blue Software

\*First time on charts

# Ever wonder how Santa finds your house?

We understand he uses the new DeLorme Street Atlas USA® 3.0 and Phone Search USA™ to find and map the homes of the naughty and nice. He can search through over 80 million US home and business listings, import selected listings into Street Atlas USA 3.0 and map their locations—down to street address level! Get these extraordinary tools for all the nice people on your list—it's the most searching and locating power available!



Incredible searching and locating power!

# Street Atlas USA 3.0

- A seamless street map of all 50 states on one CD-ROM
- Street address search power

**■Street Atlas USA** 

- Add symbols and map notes with ease
- E-mail map files to other Version 3.0 users

# Phone Search USA

- · Search by name, telephone number or business type
- · Search nationwide or limit to state, city or ZIP Code
- Export unlimited listings to other applications
- Phone data supplied by Database America Companies

# Use these remarkable tools together to:

- Find hotels for business trips
- Locate potential customers by city or ZIP Code
- Map out your errands or delivery stops
- Locate long-lost friends and relatives
- Pinpoint prospective employers
- Save on Directory Assistance charges
- Help Rudolph out in a jam
- And much more!



DELORME

P.O. Box 298-204 Freeport, ME 04032 1-800-452-5931-204, Fax: 1-800-575-2244 http://www.delorme.com

Ordering info

DELORME

Street Atlas USA 3.0 and Phone Search USA are available at your favorite software retailer, or direct from DeLorme at \$79 each (plus \$5 shipping and handling per order). (Prices subject to change.) Write to the address above or call or fax toll free! American Express, Discover, MasterCard or Visa welcome.



# best buys

single files in half the usual time.

Connectix, (800) 950-5880,
(415) 571-5100. Circle #407

# **OS/2** users deserve a break today

Who says it's no fun using OS/2 Warp these days? Sure, the PC operating system lags far behind Windows in sales and software developers' attention—all the more reason for IBM to give the folks who



like the system a break. Enter the OS/2 Warp Family FunPak CD-ROM, which packs 12 diverting OS/2 programs on one disc for only \$49.95.

Entertainment, reference, educa-

tion and finance titles join perennial favorites SimCity and Blackjack on the CD-ROM. You'll also find In Charge at Home, a finance manager; Magic Canvas, a children's paint program; the American Heritage Dictionary, with more than 50,000 words; and Rapid Assault, an arcade-style game.

IBM, (800) 426-3333, (914) 765-1900. Circle #408

# Free vaccine for Windows 95 virus

Before you install Windows 95 on your PC, you can save yourself potential grief by taking advantage of a free anti-virus scan utility from Symantec, maker of the best-selling Norton Antivirus utility.

Microsoft has confirmed that "Install Disk #2," which is part of the floppy-disk version of Windows 95, can become cor-

# **Top of the Charts**

CD-ROM	
0	Windows 95 Upgrade*
2	Microsoft Plus*
3	MechWarrior 2
4	MystBroderbund Software
5	Dark Forces
6	Phantasmagoria*
0	Flight Simulator
8	NASCAR Racing
9	Star Trek: The Next Generation "A Final Unity"
~	Spectrum HoloByte
10	Ultimate Doom Thy Flesh
Maciutosh 1	CUITCATION Disney's Animated StoryBook: The Lion King
2	Buried in Time
	SimTown Sanctuary Woods
3	
4	Kid Pix Studio  Broderbund Software
5	Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?Broderbund Software
6	Mario Teaches Typing
7	The Aladdin Activity Center
8	The Way Things Work
9	A.D.A.M. The Inside Story
10	BodyWorks*Softkey International
Macintosh	
0	Dungeon Master II*
2	Doom li*
3	Dark Forces
4	MystBroderbund Software
5	Top Ten PakElectronic Arts
Macintosh	personal productivity
0	3000 Mega Clip Art Pack
2	Quicken Intuit
3	1500 Font Mega Pack
4	Print Shop Deluxe CD Ensemble Broderbund Software
5	Print Shop Deluxe  Broderbund Software
Source: PC Date	ta (for August 1995) *First time on charts



The computer pointing device that's an extension of your brain, not your arm. As easy to install as a mouse. More accurate than a trackball. The product of eight years of neural network research, and the end of repetitive motion risk. Point, drag, tap. Now you're using your head. For information, call 1-800-223-6433.

PC and Mac versions available

The Touché Touch Pad is available at:

in Canada:







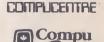














American





# best buys

rupted during installation on computers that have been infected with a boot-sector virus.

As a public section by recommend on the other persons of the section of the secti

Although the virus doesn't seem to be widespread or particularly destructive, it does render the floppy disk useless; you must then mail the damaged disk back to Microsoft to be replaced. But if you don't get rid of the virus, the replacement disk is just as vulnerable to attack as the original disk.

Symantec offers the scan on its bulletin board (503-484-6699), its Internet ftp site (ftp.symantec.com), and in its forums on commercial on-line services including America Online, CompuServe and The Microsoft Network. Look for the file named narscanz.exe; it takes just a few minutes to download the file and let it scan your PC. You've got nothing to lose—except one potential nuisance in your Windows 95 upgrade.

Symantec, (800) 441-7234, (408) 253-9600. Circle #409

# A low price to reach hired ground

Anyone who's hunting for a job soon learns that a well-organized, eye-catching résumé and cover letter can get you in the door, while sharp interview skills can help you land the job. Now, thanks to the updated ResumeMaker Deluxe (\$39.95, Windows CD-ROM), your PC can show you how to put your best foot forward—without forking over your first month's salary to do it.

The opening screen, which looks like a career counseling

office, leads you to more than 200 sample résumés and cover letters for positions from salesperson to school-teacher, as well as thank-you and follow-up notes. The career planner is designed to assess your abilities and style, then match your talents with one or more of the 3,000 jobs described in the program.

Once you've made up your mind about where to apply, the Winning Edge Workshop exercises your communication skills; you'll field common interview questions, see interviewing do's and don'ts, practice salary negotiation, and review tips on job hunting and career planning.

Once you've got a career goal and a desk full of classified ads, employ the Contact Manager section to sort through the clutter—it can



help you schedule interviews, maintain a database of company names and addresses, and more.

Individual Software, (800) 331-3313, (510) 734-6767. Circle #410 •

Forrest Gump Music, Artists and Times

CD-ROM Anthology for PC and Mac



He ran through a generation and took us with him.

Now follow Forrest on your own computer to a time when a disk was something your dog caught in mid-air, a hard drive was that road trip in your van to Woodstock, and everyone was userfriendly. It was a time for music — music that rocked the world.

Forrest Gump - Music, Artists and Times is three CD-ROMs full of exclusive inter-



See orchival concert footage, plus over 30 artists, like Dovid Crosby, tolk about the music and times.

views with over 30 artists, like Jackson Browne, Joan Baez and Brian Wilson. Plus, archival concert footage, movie clips, and a historical

timeline of the events that inspired the music.

With all of this, you don't just watch it, you *live* it. Run out and get yours today. Or order direct by calling 800-GTE-TODAY.

Discover the ero through movie clips and a historical timeline brought to life with music.



**Entertainment** 







Alsa available: Forrest Gump
The matian picture an videa fram Paramaunt

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© 1995 GTE Yantage Incorporated. All Rights Reserved. GTE Entertainment and the GTE Loga are Inademarks of GTE Yantage Incorporated Forest Gump
is a trademark of Paramaunt Pictures. All Rights Reserved. QuickTime and the QuickTime Toga are trademarks of Apple Computer, Inc., RFR.05

# I Ots. Tons. Bunches.

(Somewhere in these 9,000 software titles, could someone please find the thesaurus?)

darisWorks 10

You can find everything you could ever want in the veritable plethora, the myriad, the more-than-ample amounts of software for Macintosh computers — including the exact right word.

Lots of software. Almost more than you can count. (Unless you use one of the 220 math titles.)

Multimedia entertainment titles.

Games. Reference titles chock-full of information. Powerful home office programs for the entrepreneur. And if you're looking for a way to bring learning home, you should know that the Macintosh is in more schools than any other computer. So lots of educational programs are developed for the Mac, and not Windows.



It's good to know that the computer that takes you to the moon or the depths of the Pacific can also belp you navigate the October sales forecast. Pictured here, the Performa\* 6200.

Running software on a Macintosh.

As easy as 1,2,3.

Many Macintosh computers come with an integrated CD-ROM drive and all the basic software pre-installed. Right out of the box, you can run all sorts of exciting multimedia titles and other software—and get on the Internet, no problem. Plus, all the software designed for the Mac

basically works the same way. So whether you're looking for

How much data can fit on one CD-ROM? 650 megabytes. Much more than a thesaurus. Even more than a whole set of encyclopedias. A large amount, indeed.

Carmen Sandiego" or trying to locate another word for "a large amount," you're dealing with the same intuitive user-friendly interface. To see a few of the diverse software titles available for the Mac, turn the page. And put the power of the world's easiest computer to work for your family. The power to be your best."





# SOLVAIC SOLVAIC SOLVAIC Macintosh

From entertainment and home learning, to reference and home office, you'll find the hottest, most helpful software titles available for your family Macintosh right here. After taking advantage of the hot holiday deals in this special advertising section from Apple, why not visit us online for deals on over 100 more titles? Beginning November 1, point your web browser

to http://www.consumer.apple.com.





# We've made saving on software easier than ever.

Thumb through the following pages and you'll see some of the most popular software titles available for your Apple® Macintosh® Performa® computer. Look closely, and you'll quickly discover that you can bring home a bargain on each and every one of them this holiday season.

All of the titles inside include mail-in rebates, premium offers, or special deals that are good on purchases you make at retail.\* So after browsing through the titles inside (or the complete listing online), simply stop by your local authorized Apple retailer. After all, shopping at your Apple retailer is the best way to get the software you want today—and the only way to take advantage of the deals inside! Check out the back of this special advertising section for the name of one near you.

# How can you bring home a bargain?

Once you've purchased your favorite titles, complete and return the redemption coupon near the back of this special advertising section along with your proof(s) of purchase.

# Why not jump inside and take a look around?

We're sure you'll find the software you're looking for, and probably discover a few new ones along the way. To help you quickly identify software features you may be looking for, watch for these symbols:



NEW! New product



Power Macintosh®-native application



**NEW VERSION** Update or upgrade with new features and functionality

# Want to know more?

A complete listing of deals on more than 100 software titles will be available online starting November 1. Point your web browser to http://www.consumer.apple.com. Or stop by eWorld,™ Apple's own online community; use the shortcut "ACC" then click the "Apple Expo" button.



While you're shopping, be sure to look for the Mac OS symbol. Software packages (as well as printers and other peripherals) bearing this mark run on the Mac OS, the friendliest operating system in the world, found in Macintosh and all Mac-compatible computers.

Each of the software titles inside is placed into categories, so it's quick and easy to find exactly what you're looking for.

# **Home Learning**

These education titles are so much fun, your kids will get excited about learning!

### Lifestyle/Reference

Everything you ever wanted to know about travel, cooking, gardening, home improvements, and more!

# **Home Entertainment**

Take a look at what's hot and what's cool in home entertainment with the latest in multimedia CD-ROMs and software games.

# **Home Office**

Whether you run a business out of your home or simply want to manage your personal finances, you'll get it all done with time to spare using these productivity solutions.

Offer Code 121

# Active Mind Series by Broderbund



STO REBATE on your purchase of an Active Mind Series title

The Playroom

A A A T II

Workshop

Workshop

Workshop

Workshop

Workshop

A world where learning comes to life.

The Active Mind Series™ is an innovative line of educational software that motivates children to develop essential learning skills. The Playroom® provides children ages 3–6 with an enjoyable introduction to letters and numbers. James Discovers Math™ introduces kids ages 3–6 to basic math through 10 skill-building activities. Math Workshop™ makes it fun for children ages 6–10 to practice and improve computation and problem-solving skills. Dynamic learning environments rich in graphics, sound, and animation fuel children's imaginations and broaden their knowledge.

- ► Encourages active learning
- · Developed in conjunction with educational specialists
- · Provides progressive levels of challenge and hours of learning fun

Technology & Learning Award of Excellence, 1990 Seal of Approval from the National Parenting Center, 1991

Offer Code 147

# Sesame Street: Let's Make a Word! by Creative Wonders





Championing early reading skills.

After preschoolers learn their letters, they're ready for Let's Make a Word!™ Children ages 3–6 join their favorite Sesame Street® characters on the set of the "Let's Make a Word!" game show, hosted by the lovable Guy Smiley, to create 24 different word activity combinations. Kids choose from six different Muppet "word experts"—who each play a unique game—and four different environments—where they'll develop early reading skills.

- · Provides motivation and positive feedback
- Animation, original music, authentic character voices, and Sesame Street humor enhance game play
- ▶ The most popular children's educational title



pening screen to the "Let's Make a Word!" game show—starring Guy Smiley.

Receive Sesame Street Numbers (\*39 value) with your Sesame Street: Let's Make a Word proof of purchase. Offer requires \*4,95 shipping and handling. Make check or money order payable to TPI Promotional Marketing. Limit one product per customer.

Offer Code 132

# Kid Works Deluxe by Davidson & Associates, Inc.





Build your child's creative skills.

Kid Works Deluxe™ is the all-new way for children ages 4–9 to maximize their creativity and imagination through writing and painting. Combining a word-processor and full-feature paint program into one kit, Kid Works Deluxe helps kids create their very own illustrated stories, poems, journals, and more. The program will even read their stories aloud, in a variety of fun voices or in the child's own voice!



- ▶ Create multimedia projects with words, pictures, and sounds
- ► Includes over 650 images and 100 sound effects
- ▶ Printable color illustrations and stories

\$5
REBATE
on your Kid
Works Deluxe
purchase.

Cool central interface provides easy access to all tools.

Offer Code 105

# The Way Things Work by DK Multimedia





A "mammoth" guide to machines.

The Way Things Work is based on David Macaulay's best-selling book, which has sold more than three million copies. This multimedia masterpiece describes 200 machines in detail and also includes a "Who's Who of Inventors," an "Inventor's Workshop," and 20 humorous "Mammoth Movies" starring David Macaulay's famous woolly mammoth. Appropriate for ages 8 and up.

- ► Over 1,500 screens and pop-up windows
- More than 280 animations

SPA Codies Excellence in Software Award — Critic's Choice, 1995 Best Software for Children — Oppenheim Toy Portfolio



Tools and toys to strengthen kids' thinking.

The Thinkin' Things Collections help children build critical-thinking, memory, creativity, and other essential learning skills. The highly acclaimed Thinkin' Things Collection 1 offers kids ages 4–8 six fun-filled activities that encourage experimentation, investigation, and creativity—while fostering self-esteem. Thinkin' Things Collection 2 uses five innovative activities to challenge kids ages 6–12 to strengthen observation and analysis, improve visual and auditory memory, develop spatial awareness, and advance creativity.

- ▶ Unique grow slides increase level of difficulty
- ▶ Both challenge and inspire young minds

Awarded 5 mice — MacUser

Offer Code 150

# Putt-Putt Saves The Zoo by Humongous Entertainment

NEW!



Find the baby animals in time to open the zoo.

In Putt-Putt® Saves The Zoo,™ join Putt-Putt and Pep as they help Outback Al get ready to open the Cartown Zoo. There's so much to do: the bridge is out, zoo chow's running low, and six different baby animals are missing! Using secret click points, kids ages 3–8 can play ice hockey with a polar bear, make a bridge out of icebergs, send Putt-Putt and Pep swinging on vines over rivers filled with alligators, and more.

- ► Rich feature film-quality animation
- More than 25,000 hand-drawn frames of animation
- More than 500 secret click points
- ▶ 90 minutes of original music

FREE book & audio tape!



Receive Putt-Putt's Night Before Christmas book and audio tape (\*9.95 value) with your Putt-Putt Saves The Zoo proof of purchases. Offer requires "3 shipping and handling. Make check or money order payable to Humongous Entertainment.

Offer Code 140

# JumpStart Kindergarten by Knowledge Adventure, Inc.





Get a head start on education.

Children ages 4—6 delight as Mr. Hopsalot, a cartoon bunny, helps them tell time, identify upper- and lower-case letters, rhyme words, match shapes, understand prepositions, recognize numbers, and sort objects that are either alike or different. Songs that teach the ABCs, anatomy, and animals can also be listened to on a home audio CD player. Creativity is inspired with an imbedded paint program that features printable screens—which can be colored on-screen or by hand.

• Introduces and reinforces kindergarten-level curriculum

• Researched and developed under the direction of kindergarten teachers

Includes "Bill's Guarantee" promising customer delight or a full refund

REBATE on your JumpStart Kindergarten purchase.

Offer Code 138

# Student Writing Center by The Learning Company

riting Center



Hassle-free desktop publishing.

This best-selling writing and publishing program makes it easy for students ages 10 and up to create reports, newsletters, journals, letters, and signs. It automatically formats bibliographies, and includes a spell checker, a thesaurus, and a journal with password protection. It's award-winning software that helps children design their own documents—while building their self-esteem and improving their creative thinking.

► Five preformatted document types

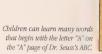
- Easy access, online writing and grammar tips

Award of Excellence — CD-ROM Today, January 1995 Software Award for Excellence, Next in Series — Technology & Learning, 1994

# Dr. Seuss's extraordinary world comes to life.

"A" is for amazing alphabet. "B" is for beginning readers. "C" is for clicking on curious characters. The magic of Dr. Seuss's Beginner Book comes to life in this new addition to the popular Living Books® line of interactive stories on CD-ROM. More than 500 alphabetically inspired surprises, hidden within 26 pages, help children make the connection between words and sounds. Children ages 3-7 love to learn with the distinctive Seuss style of humor, rhyme, and animation

- Dr. Seuss's Original Beginner Book included
- · ABC Song sing-along included
- · Soundtrack plays on home audio CD players





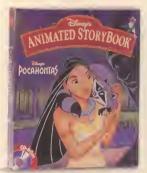
Rebate valid for purchase of another Living Book title when you purchase Dr. Seuss's ABC (coupon in box).

Offer Code 100

# Pocahontas Animated Storybook by Disney Interactive







# A story waiting for you to make it happen.

Children ages 3-8 enter Pocahontas' world and share her adventures, as she romps with Meeko and Flit and boldly saves Captain John Smith. Quality animation, created by Disney's Feature Animation artists, adds to the realism as children explore Native American and settler communities, a 17th-century sailing ship, and other beautiful environments.

The story is enhanced by four challenging games that build essential thinking skills, multiple playing levels to challenge new and experienced players, surprise animation for kids to discover on every page, and an Action Dictionary that lets kids see words defined with amusing animation.

Relive the story at your own pace

video!

- · Interact with your favorite characters
- · Click on words or pictures to discover surprise animations



Receive a Pocahontas mouse pad with your Pocahontas Animated Storybook proof of purchase. Limit one free mouse pad per customer.

# Oregon Trail II by MECC





# Challenge the unpredictable Western frontier.

The perennial favorite of kids nationwide is now even better! Oregon Trail II is an award-winning interactive, multimedia virtual adventure that lets kids ages 10 and up become pioneers traveling westward through time. Set from 1840–1860, Oregon Trail II features three action-packed levels of play, digitized characters that offer advice, 3-D rendered towns and forts, video

clips that provide users with a sense of the trail, realistic hunting for survival, and more. Give your kids an actionpacked adventure of a lifetime.

- Develops problem-solving and critical-thinking skills
- ► Over 5,000 photo-realistic images
- ► Long playability

Receive "West to Oregon" video (129.95 value) In box with your Oregon Trail II purchase.

Offer Code 110

# WiggleWorks by Apple Home Learning



# Makes learning to read and write fun.

WiggleWorks™ is the classroom-proven software that's made it fun for thousands of children ages 3—8 to learn to read and write. It stimulates children's creativity while it teaches basic skills. Designed in partnership with Scholastic Inc., the leading educational publisher, it builds confidence at home—so kids have a head start in school. Its colorful characters and stories involve children and sustain their curiosity about words. And each story pack con-

tains three stories, as well as activities that hold children's attention.

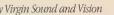
- ► Helps kids learn the basics of reading and writing
- ► Fun activities expand kids' creativity
- Lets children work at their own pace

Awarded 3 stars - Home PC, 1995

Silver Apple Award, Multimedia Category — National Educational Media Network, 1995 Editors' Choice Award - Newsweek 1995



# Get Ready For School, Charlie Brown! by Virgin Sound and Vision





# An interactive Peanuts learning adventure.

Spend a fun-filled school day learning new words, spelling, and reading! Kids ages 4-8 enjoy classic television-style animation and original character voices as they learn through real-life situations and environments. Games and activities bring Snoopy's 1,000-word interactive picture dictionary to life, and kids can use Snoopy's dictionary to look up words found in the games. The dictionary includes definitions and sample sentences read aloud by your favorite characters, plus over 1,000 classic comic strips created by Charles M. Schulz.

- ▶ Vocabulary words, compiled by educators
- Seven fun learning games and real-life environments reinforce learning
- ► Three difficulty levels



Help Snoopy conquer bis writer's block by choosing words for 15 stories.

Receive a Peanuts video (19.99 value) In box when you purchase Get Ready For School, Charlie Brown!

Offer Code 120

# Where's Waldo? At The Circus by Warner Active

Kids learn with the greatest of ease.

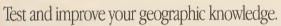
Waldo's unique search-and-find approach teaches your child basic problem-solving skills using mathematical concepts. Señor Piccalilli, the Circus Ringmaster, needs your child's help in finding Waldo. Piccalilli, Waldo, and your child must save the big circus show by finding the ringmaster's magic golden whistle. After children find Waldo, they embark on

a journey filled with fun and challenging learning exercises in different circus areas. As each area is completed, Waldo and your child collect the clues that will locate the missing whistle and save the circus!

- ➤ More than 20 educational exercises, each featuring five levels of difficulty, for ages 4—9
- ➤ Variable outcomes in all key areas
- ➤ Captivating animation and brilliant 256-color graphics

Receive a Waldo activity book (\*3.95 value) with your Where's Waldo? At The Circus proof of purchase.

# GeoBee by The National Geographic Society



Everyone's buzzing about GeoBee™—the new software game from The National Geographic Society. Featuring brain teasers drawn from the giant database of questions from the National Geography Bee, GeoBee brings all the fun, and nail-biting tension, of that national contest to your computer screen. Introduced by Alex Trebek, host and moderator of TV's "Jeopardy!," the game tests the geographic knowledge of up to four players at a time. Players must advance through three levels of difficulty to win the game. GeoBee's thousands of questions cover all aspects of world geography.

Features over 3,000 questions

Designed for up to four players, ages 10 and up

eceive ZIPZAPMAP! USA (\*39.95 valu with your GeoBee proof of purchase.





# The Beer Hunter by Discovery Channel Multimedia



# Serving the beer connoisseur.

Join the North American beer renaissance with renowned English beer expert Michael Jackson. The Beer Hunter highlights the richness and diversity of the recent micro brewery revival in the United States, putting a wealth of information at the beer enthusiast's fingertips. Learn what qualities distinguish Michael Jackson's 24 favorite American beers and ales in MJ's Top 24 list. Search for brews by region, style, fermentation, color, and taste. The Beer Hunter also includes a section on the art of brewing, with tips on ingredients, equipment, and procedures needed for making great beer at home.

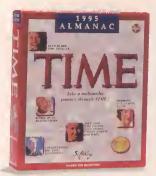
- · Authoritative history of the art of brewing in text, photographs, and video clips
- Complete guide to U.S. micro breweries
- ► Includes Michael Jackson's top 24 brews, and where to find them
- ▶ Printable lists of recommended favorites to take on beer hunts

Receive a software sample (9.99 value) with your The Beer Hunter proof of purchase.





# TIME Almanac '95 by SoftKey



# A multimedia journey through TIME.

Now you can relive the greatest triumphs and tragedies of the 20th century. Witness the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York, the signing of the Mideast Peace Accord, and the election of Nelson Mandela in South Africa, Meet the heroes and villains of history as you explore the past—decade by decade—simply by clicking on the topics which interest you. Review hundreds of photos, maps, and videos, plus thousands of niveting firsthand accounts of the century's most important events.

- ► Includes every TIME® article published from January 1989 through January 1995
- Over 400 tables and charts from U.S. Statistical Abstracts
- Features the complete 1994 CIA World Factbook

"Best Almanac CD-ROM" - Macworld Software Award of Excellence - Technology & Learning Magazine

Receive Instant Calendar (12.99 value) with your TIME Almanac '95 proof of purchase.

Offer Code 174

# Blockbuster Video Guide to Movies and Videos by Creative Multimedia



The only monthly movie guide with monthly electronic updates.

Whether you're a serious film buff or looking for just the right movie, this product is the ideal, up-to-date entertainment guide for the whole family. Get the scoop on how a movie rates with the critics in our comprehensive review section. Take a tour through the great movie genres. Step behind the scenes and learn all about your

favorite actors. Find movies by title, actor or actress, director, MPAA rating,

Academy Award® winners, genre, and much more.

- Select your favorite movie from over 21,000 titles
- ▶ 5,000 photographs and 40 video clips
- Features 4,000 biographies and videographies
- Discover over 65 years of Academy Award winners



The guide features movie reviews, photos, clips, and trivia questions

Offer Code 181

# Mayo Clinic Family Health 1996 Edition by IVI Publishing, Inc.



Your comprehensive health reference.

Mayo Clinic, a world leader in health care and medicine, and IVI Publishing present the newest version of the best-selling health CD-ROM, Mayo Clinic Family Health. Because your family's health is your most important investment, Mayo Clinic Family Health now allows you to keep records of your family's medical histories. It also provides a gateway into a Global Health Community online, direct from the CD-ROM. You'll find facts and multimedia illustrations of more than

> 1,000 medical conditions, and topics include prevention, life cycles, common symptoms, 911 emergency, and much more.

- ▶ Free Internet navigator included for access to online health community
- Drug Reference allows you to check information and interaction on over 3,000 drugs
- Poison Guide lets you see common household poisons through the eyes of a child

Be prepared for an emergency.

Movies and Video

Offer Code 169

**Better Homes and Gardens Presents** 

# Great American Cooking by Multicom Publishing



# Mouthwatering recipes from across the country.

Featuring over 500 recipes, this delightfully interactive CD-ROM culinary guide simmers with multimedia features that help you become a cooking and meal planning expert, including essential step-by-step instructions that guide you through each recipe. With more than 125 helpful cooking videos, plus nutrition information, printable shopping lists, meal planning tools, and a powerful yet simple-to-use recipe finder, you'll never cook the same way again!



- Each recipe has been tested for quality and flavor by the experts at the Better Homes and Gardens® Test Kitchen
- · Features beautiful photographs throughout

Essential instructions guide you to your finished dish.







Live and relive the defining moments of our times.

world affairs, science and technology, politics, sports, cultural trends, and art. Based on the best-selling book—and crossreferenced with The Columbia Encyclopedia, Fifth Edition—Our Times provides information on topics both within and beyond the 20th century. A robust search engine and

over 65,000 hypertext links provide easy access to vast amounts of information. With over 52,000 articles, eight million words, 2,500 images, charts,

maps and graphs, 120 minutes of narration, and in-depth video documentaries, Our Times is the ideal reference source.

Narrated by the captivating James Earl Jones, Our Times™ is the fun and fascinating way to learn about 20th-century

- Kids will be immersed in 20th-century history
- · Students can easily access information to create reports
- Families come together to live and relive the 20th century



available for ready access to each decade and year

# Home Repair Encyclopedia by Books That Work

Meet your interactive handyman.

Home Repair Encyclopedia gives you the confidence to tackle do-it-yourself projects—while saving time and money! Built with multimedia guides and detailed instructions to keep your home running smoothly, it features built-in software calculators that take the guesswork out of selecting and estimating your building materials. It also offers expert advice, helpful hints, detailed reference guides, illustrated animations, and diagrams, as well as cross-linked explanations.

- Detailed explanations and instructions, illustrated with animations
- Includes tips from the pros
- · Powerful search feature lets you find answers quickly

Detailed instructions help you keep your home in shape









# Marathon 2: Durandal by Bungie Software

The captivating adventure continues.

The designers of the award-winning action adventure game Marathon have unleashed their most stunning creation yet, Marathon 2: Durandal. Fresh from your triumph on the starship Marathon, you are seized by the rogue computer Durandal and forced to do his bidding in a distant part of the galaxy. Within the ruins of an ancient civiliza-

tion, you must seek the remnants of a lost clan and uncover their long-buried secrets. Whether you choose first-person action or network play, the outdoor and underwater environments, ambient sounds, and widescreen format will immerse you in the action.

Receive a Marathon poster (\*10 value) with your Marathon 2 proof of purchase.



Offer Code 189

# Absolute Zero by Domark Software, Inc.

Forget winning; think survival.

An alien invasion from the once-dormant core of Europa has instantly transformed your peaceful mining colony into a war zone. In order to mount a defense, you must first figure out how to convert your mining machinery—hovercraft, maglocks, fuel stations, and more—into weapons of war.

Fly up to 30 missions in three different arenas of war: space, surface, and subterranean areas.

To conquer the attacking aliens, you'll have seven characters, seven vehicles, and 13 weapons systems at your disposal. Now, it's just a matter of surviving.

- ► Full-motion video sequences and interactive CD soundtrack
- Over 70 texture-mapped active objects on-screen simultaneously
- Fly and drive seven different vehicles with 13 different weapons systems

commander and Absolute Ze v





Think quick! Your colony's being attacked.



# Doom | by GT Interactive







Codies Award - Best Action Arcade Program, 1995

# The game you've been waiting for.

Take a deep breath; the fiendish monsters and vicious slime of Doom II™ are here to challenge you to all-new, heart-pounding combat. This version of the megahit contains every one of the 30 fiercest, most action-packed levels, plus 3-D texture-mapped graphics—with four times the resolution of the PC version! For even more thrills, Doom II comes with complete networking capabilities for Mac-to-PC and Mac-to-Mac play, including AppleTalk.® Available on CD-ROM or  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " diskette. Appropriate for ages 17 and up.

- Integrated Macintosh interface with customizable keys, standard Mac menu commands, and other options
- Direct WAD File Support to download all the "home-brew" Doom™ levels available online
- Sharper graphics than ever with increased resolution—up to 640 x 400 pixels

Receive an exclusive Doom II poster (% value with your Doom II proof of purchase.



Battle fiendish monsters through 30 beart pounding levels of all-out action.

Offer Code 187

# F/A-18 Hornet 2.0 by Graphic Simulations

Editor's Choice Award, 1st Choice for Best Game - Electronic Entertainment, 1995







# Fly the dangerous skies.

Each mission takes you deep into a new conflict in the Middle East, flying against the newest technology and the best-trained pilots the enemies of freedom can produce. Voice messages guide you during airbase/carrier operations and provide crucial air combat information. Use your APT-65 radar system and Radar Warning Receiver to stay aware; fire off your M61 Vulcan cannon

or Sidewinder and AMRAAM missiles for air-to-air defenses. Laser-guided bombs or HARM and Mayerick Missiles provide the most effective and destructive air-to-ground ordnance available.

· Connect up to four computers via AppleTalk network for multiple-player action (additional purchase required)

- Radio voice messages from the ground and the air keep you constantly aware

Best Flight Simulator - Macworld Game Hall of Fame, 1994 Flight Simulator of the Year - Inside Mac Games, 1993

Receive a game enhancer (\*19.99 value) with your F/A-18 Hornet 2.0 proof of purchase.



"Here's that AIM-9 Sidewinder you ordered:

Offer Code 195

# Orces by LucasArts Entertainment Company







# All-out war in the *Star Wars* universe.

Behind a veil of secrecy, the evil Empire is creating a doomsday army—one that, if completed, will become the final cog in the Empire's arsenal of terror and domination. Your mission? Join the rebel Alliance's covert operations division, infiltrate the Empire, then battle every man and machine the Imperial Forces can muster. Search a vast galaxy for clues and attack enemy bases—all in a desperate attempt to stop the activation of this fearsome new weapon.

(\*6 value) with your Dark Forces™ proof of purchase.

- ▶ Use 10 lethal weapons to fight 20 types of enemies
- · Explore the richly detailed Star Wars universe
- ► Fully interactive environments

Awarded 5 stars - Multimedia World All-Star Computer Player Recommended "Perfect 10 score"





Get up close and personal with stormtroopers

# Descent by MacPlay

Offer Code 218





This mind-boggling, action-packed shoot 'em up by MacPlay™ will have you blasting your way through a galaxy of 30 mind-bending, stomach-churning, robot-infested levels. Be warned: These creatures learn quickly, adjusting their tactics based on your actions. Featuring eyeball-bulging 3-D worlds with light-source shading, texture mapping, directional sound effects, and sizzling music, Descent® takes technology and excitement to a shattering new level. Up becomes down and then up again, with true 360-degree gameplay.

- Multi-player action with eight-player network and tournament mode, and two-player head-to-head modem support to play Mac-to-Mac or Mac-to-PC
- The only game of its kind with a full 360-degree 3-D environment
- Multi-directional sound effects and blazing musical scores
- #1 on the Internet Top 100 Games list for eight months





Receive a free MacPlay T-shirt (\*15 value) when you purchase both Descent and Frankenstein.







Software Publishers' Association Codies Award - Best Simulation, 1995

# The world's largest fixer-upper.

Reach for the sky with SimTower!™ Start with a small office complex—a lobby, a few offices, and a café—and expand with more floors, offices, and elevators until you've created the ultimate skyscraper. Diversify your business into hotel rooms, shops, theaters, restaurants, condos, and more, as you build your way to the top. Create massive underground parking garages, and transport your building's occupants via an intricate elevator system you design, schedule, and refine. Look out for fires, roach infestation, and even terrorists. It's all in a day's work managing SimTower, your vertical empire.

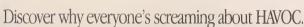
- Monitor the profitability of your building
- · Work your way up from a one-star building to a five-star tower
- Lure new tenants by adjusting rents and adding amenities



use the profits to build, huild huild

Offer Code 191

# **HAVOC** by Reality Bytes



HAVOC™ bursts with multiplayer 3-D energy, fully exploiting the latest in 3-D hardware acceleration from Apple. Kids ages 10 and up can compete in 360 degree outdoor action over 3-D post-apocalyptic terrain. Command a BattleCycle, HyperTank, or HoverCraft. Blast, jump, and throttle past opponents over a network or modem, or challenge yourself in arcade missions. An industry first, HAVOC also includes an extra-player CD that you can share with friends—regardless of whether they have Mac OS or Windows® 95. You can even

wreak HAVOC by your voice commands, with support for Apple PlainTalk.™

- ▶ 360-degree outdoor arcade action and real 3-D texture-mapped enemies
- Play over network or modem against Mac OS or Windows 95 opponents on cross-platform CD
- Screams with the latest 3-D hardware acceleration, 3-D graphics, and stereo sound



Receive a HAVOC 3-D black T-shirt (\*18 value) with your HAVOC proof of purchase.

Offer Code 206

# Star Trek: The Next Generation "A Final Unity" by Spectrum Holo Byte







Make it so.

The crew's all here. Riker.™ Worf.™ Data™ Troi.™ And, of course, Captain Picard. You hear Riker report that a ship is speeding through the forbidden Neutral Zone. Data announces they're Garidian, and Troi explains they may be on friendly terms with the Romulans. Captain Picard orders an intercept. Suddenly you're there, too.

Part of an original interactive mystery. Part of an epic intergalactic adventure which will take you from the outposts of Federation space, through treacherous shields-up confrontations, and beyond-into the uncharted dangers of a massive nebula.

- Dazzling 3-D graphics and cinematic sequences
- · With all the voices of the TV cast
- Control the seven main characters

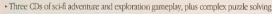


Now you're in command of the Starship Enterprise. Take the Bridge.

# The Daedalus Encounter by Virgin Interactive Entertainment



Voyage through deep space with Tia Carrere in an interactive thriller that plays as smooth as it looks. In the cold, dark heart of a ravaged galaxy, a scavenger ship is being dragged at blistening speed toward the scorching center of an alien sun. Only you-an intergalactic war vet, more machine than man-can unlock the mysteries of an eerie 3-D rendered vessel and ward off vicious alien attacks in order to save your old comrades Ari (Carrere) and Zack (Christian Bocher) from involuntary solar cremation.



- · Three levels of increasing difficulty and multiple endings
- ► Hyper-real 3-D environments and navigable QuickTime® video

Thumbs Up Award - New Media

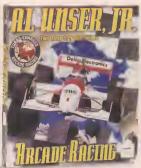
Finalist - New Media INVISION Awards, Adventure/Role Playing Games Category





# Al Unser, Jr. Arcade Racing by Mindscape





# This is no Sunday drive in the country.

Feel the need for speed? Well, you're in for the white-knuckle ride of your life! Circle the track alone, feeling out your car. Then blast into Competition mode, where you're suddenly up against 10 of the most cunning drivers around. They'll instinctively respond to your car's every move as you race them over 15 different courses at raging speeds.

- ▶ Play over a network in Duel mode
- Race in four turbo-powered modes
- 15 challenging courses



You're in the driver's seat, racing against

10 of the top drivers around.

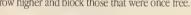
Offer Code 225

# Shanghai: Great Moments by Activision

# The tile-matching obsession returns.

Classic Shanghai® returns, with three new games. In Beijing, you must slide rows of tiles to make a match, but be careful one wrong match and a triple-scoring move disappears. At The Great Wall, it's you against a wall of tiles, snapping pairs off to dismantle its mighty structure—while gravity holds true, and tiles fall as lower ones are removed. Action Shanghai dares you to

clear the screen before additional tiles appear. Speed is a factor, as stacks of tiles grow higher and block those that were once free.



- Themed video clips, animations, speech, and sound effects
- ▶ Nine interchangeable tile sets
- ▶ Play in solitaire, two-player, or tournament mode

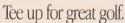
Receive Sargon V (\*24.95 value) with your Shanghai: Great Moments proof of purchase. Offer requires \*5.95 shipping and handling. Make check or money order payable to Activision.



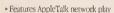
Offer Code 211

# Links Pro CD Macintosh by Access Software

softwar



From tee to green, Links Pro CD Macintosh is unrivaled in recreating the true golfing experience. It's Power Macintosh compatible for faster game play, and it features Apple Talk network play-so you can golf with up to seven other players. Two world-class golf courses, Harbour Town Golf Links and Banff Springs, have been reproduced in painstaking detail-you'll feel as if you're actually there! Simulated aerial fly-bys, golf tips, digital music, and a "comic caddie" option all help make your desktop golfing experience complete.



- Voice recognition
- New sound options

Codies Award, Best Sports Game - Software Publishers' Association Hall of Fame - Computer Gaming World

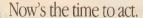


One of the many beautifully rendered oolf courses available

Receive Bountiful Golf Club Course CD-ROM (\*29.95 value) with your Links Pro CD-ROM proof of purchase.

Offer Code 200

# Buried In Time: The Journeyman Project II by Sanctuary Woods



Travel through time as Agent 5, searching for clues—in both past and future worlds—in order to avoid being framed for a crime you didn't commit. The long awaited sequel to the hit The Journeyman Project TURBO, Buried in Time is an epic graphic adventure that uses the latest technology to incorporate live-action video, 3-D animation, and an original stereo soundtrack to create an engaging and realistic cinematic experience.

- Over 25,000 rendered images
- · Captivating original soundtrack and effects
- Vivid live-action video sequences and 3-D environments

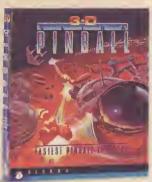
INVISION Gold Award for Best Animation - New Media, 1995 INVISION Bronze Award for Story & Script - New Media, 1995



of seven photo-realistic worlds

Offer Code 213

# 3-D Ultra Pinball by Sierra On-Line



# Play outside the limits.

Snap back the plunger, then let it rip. Send your pinball to three out-of-this-world play fields: a cavernous space mine, a gritty command post, and The Colony-the mother of all manic action pinball tables. Bank the right sequence of shots and you'll be able to warp between tables, taking the pinballs you have in play along with you. Feel the friction of the

flippers as you play 3-D ramps and bumpers so huge, so intense, they pull traditional pinball kicking and screaming to a higher level.

- · Authentic incline and realistic gameplay
- Non-scrolling tables
- Stunning 3-D graphics and realistic sound effects



Ultra-fast multi-ball play puts you into the play field.

Purchase 3-D Ultra Pinball plus either Space Quest 6 or The Lost Mind of Dr. Brain, and receive Lode Runner (\*49,95 value) free. Offer requires \*4,95 shipping and handling. Make check or money order payable to Sierra On-Line.



# Home Office

# Home Office Collection for Macintosh Performa by Claris





Get your home office organized and productive in no time.

Start up your home office right with Apple Home Office Collection for Macintosh Performa. This value-packed bundle includes powerful applications to help you be more productive with all your home business computing tasks. You'll make the most of your time using versatile Claris® Organizer,® new Claris Emailer,™ time-saving

templates for ClarisWorks, and ready-to-use business solutions based on best-selling FileMaker Pro. Then with all the time you save, you can spend it enjoying one of two exciting interactive adventures: Wild Africa or The Journeyman Project TURBO.

- ► Save valuable time with four productivity software solutions
- Relax and unwind with two exciting multimedia titles
- ► Includes a FREE Apple watch

Offer Code 249

# Adobe HomePublisher Deluxe 2.0 CD by Adobe Systems Inc.





Your complete document publishing solution.

Adobe™ HomePublisher™ Deluxe includes everything you need to create first-class publications—newsletters, flyers, brochures, and more—without any previous desktop publishing experience. Easy-to-use "intelligent" templates guide you through simple design choices, then automatically create a document tailored to your needs. In minutes, you'll have the quality results you once thought only a professional designer could create! With over 1,500 color and black-and-white clip art images, you'll be able to create a sophisticated image for your business stationery, or design effective newsletters with a polished look.

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Editors' Choice Award - MacUser Editors' Pick - Home Office Computing, 1995 Receive Adobe TypeTwister (\*49.99 value) with your HomePublisher proof of purchase. Offer requires \$7.50 shipping and handling. Make check or money order payable to Adobe Systems inc.

# Adobe SuperPaint Deluxe 3.5 CD by Adobe Systems Inc.



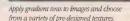


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SuperPaint™ is recognized worldwide as one of the easiest to use, yet most powerful graphics programs around. The userfriendly interface guides you step-by-step throughout the design process, allowing you to create exceptional quality designs in minutes. Use any paint or draw tool with unique fill effects such as textures, patterns, gradients, and colors. And by using the online art catalog browser, your works of art will be completed in no time!

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# Faster, easier, and more flexible than ever.

Quicken® is the fastest, easiest way to organize your finances. Quicken tracks it all—checking, savings, credit cards, investments, loans, and more. With Quicken you'll always know how much money you have, and exactly where it's going. Revealing reports and graphs show you where your money is spent, how your investments are doing, and more. Plan for retirement, tax time, college tuition, buying a home, refinancing a mortgage—even a vacation.



- ► Looks like your paper checkbook so you can get started right away
- Pays bills, prints checks, and reconciles your bank account in less time than it takes by hand
- ► Includes coupon for free online banking software—available late 1995

Editors' Choice Award - Mac Home Journal, 1995 Awarded 4½ mice — MacUser

# MacInTax & MacInTax Deluxe by Intuit, Inc.







# The easiest way to do your taxes.

This tax season, put America's #1 best-selling tax software for the Macintosh to work for you! MacInTax makes preparing your taxes easy, in three easy steps. Step 1: Answer MacInTax's easy-to-understand interview questions. Step 2: MacInTax doublechecks your return. Step 3: Print ready-to-file forms on plain white paper, sign them, and drop them in the mail.

MacInTax Deluxe on CD-ROM includes video tax tips and the Tax Library, a collection of on-screen books and 30 IRS Publications that provide you with all the information you need to save money on your taxes.

- Guaranteed accurate calculations. If the IRS penalizes you due to a calculation error in MacInTax, Intuit will pay the penalty plus any interest
- ► If you're not satisfied with MacInTax, Intuit will refund your money

Awarded 5 stars - ComputerLife, February 1995 Awarded 41 mice - MacUser, February 1995



Offer Code 246

# Microsoft Office version 4.2.1 by Microsoft





# Multiple programs that work together as one.

The most popular set of programs for the Macintosh, Microsoft® Office includes Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, and a Microsoft Mail workstation license. Microsoft Office takes you well beyond the traditional approach to ease of use, integration, customer solutions, and compatibility with Office family programs for Windows. Office was designed with IntelliSense™ technology, so it senses what you want to do and intelligently produces the desired result. IntelliSense makes routine tasks automatic and complex tasks far simpler. Office also maximizes your Macintosh by supporting key Apple technologies.



- ► Focus on your analysis and not your data with the PivotTable™ Wizard
- Pick a Look Wizard gives your presentation the custom look you want

Offer valid when you purchase Microsoft Office 4.2.1, plus one of the following titles: Connectix RAM Doubler; Microsoft Encerta '95, or Microsoft Bookshalf on

Offer Code 247

# WordPerfect 3.5 by Novell, Inc.







# Work faster, smarter, easier.

FAIR EXCHANGE

Reports, letters, budgets, long documents—any task is a snap with WordPerfect® 3.5. It corrects grammatical errors, fits text into pages, formats documents, corrects typos as you work, and much more. All tools are easy to access, and it's simple to complete many complex tasks with just one click. Plus, WordPerfect 3.5 supports all of the advanced Mac technologies.

Superior quality, comprehensive word processing, and intuitive features: It all adds up to the power to do your best, quickly and easily.

- Read and publish information from the Internet
- ▶ 85 pre-designed templates
- Features tables, bookmarks, and macros

WordPerfect 3.5 belps you work faster and easier

# Keep essential information at your fingertips.

This best-selling calendar and contact manager for the Macintosh keeps your daily schedule and phone list attached to the menu bar for instant, single-click access from any application. QuickPad™ allows you to jot down to-dos and phone messages on the fly, automatically entering them in your calendar and address book—all without launching the main application. Great looking built-in templates are included for address books, envelopes, labels, and all popular appointment book sizes.

Now, no matter where you are, your information's always there when you need it.

- Contains everything you need to manage schedules, contacts, appointments, and to-do lists
- View your day at a glance, or get a list of key names and phone numbers, no matter what program you're running
- · Automatically looks up names and numbers, and captures to-dos on-the-fly
- ► Prints easily to paper organizers, labels, and envelopes

World Class Winner — Macworld, 1994 Editors' Choice Award — MacUser, 1993 \$25
REBATE
on your Now
Up-to-Date &
Contact 3.5
purchase.

Offer Code 239

# Incredible Image Pak 25,000 by T/Maker Company

The most "incredible" image library available.

T/Maker's classic ClickArt collection has now grown to include over 25,000 unique, high-quality images in more than 125 categories. Plus, all 25,000 images are specially designed to print at the highest possible resolution on either color or black-and-white printers. And, as if that weren't already enough, Incredible Image Pak 25,000 also includes a bonus collection of 1,000 TrueType® ClickArt fonts, free! It's an outstanding collection sure to help you

present the right image for your project.

· Available in Macintosh-standard EPS format

- ► Free Kudd™ Image Browser, handwritten fonts, and ClickArt Preview collections
- · ClickArt Design Handbook is packed with tips, tricks, and techniques
- ► Electronic documentation

Editors' Choice Award as one of the top 100 products of 1995 — *HomePC* Editors' Choice Award — *Macworld*, 1994, 1993

Offer Code 234

# Expresso Calendar & Address Book by Berkeley Systems

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COUNTY LATION

POWER ALION

CALENDAR - ADDRESS BOOK - TO-DD LIST

The calendar that works the way you do.

The Expresso™ Calendar & Address Book is the first computer calendar that's as easy to use as pencil and paper. With the click-and-type format, you'll never see a dialog box or have to navigate clumsy menus. And, with FlashBack technology (patent pending), your calendar is always accessible from any program. View your calendar by month, week, or day. Set priorities with the to-do list. Print your calendar and address book in the most popular organizer

sizes and styles. Take your calendar on the road and update your old version automatically with the synchronize feature.

- Set alarms, recurring events, or private events quickly and easily
- ► Choose from over 20 attractive backgrounds
- ► Import data from other calendar products
- Drag and drop to link names and addresses to your calendar

Your calendar is always at your fingertips.

Offer Code 232

# Retrospect 3.0 by Dantz Development Corporation

Powerful backup software for the Macintosh.

Protect your computer files from hard disk crash, fire, theft, or other unforeseen disasters with Retrospect,® the most trusted and recommended backup software in the industry. Whether you choose to perform immediate backups or schedule a completely unattended backup, Retrospect's EasyScript™ makes it simple to automate every aspect of your backup—

including which files to back up, where to put them, and when to do it. When a backup is scheduled, Retrospect automatically scans your hard disk and then copies only new or changed files—saving time and storage media. The Duplicate function copies any local volume or folder and retains files in Finder™ format.

- Restores an entire hard disk in a single step, even after multiple incremental backups
- Includes compression, encryption, and support for almost every SCSI device ever made
- Accelerated for the Power Macintosh and fully compatible with almost every storage device

Awarded  $4\frac{1}{2}$  mice — MacUser Editors' Choice Award — MacUser, 1993







\$35 REBATE on your Retrospect 3.0 purchase.

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Taking advantage of the hot holiday deals inside is easy. Simply stop by your local authorized Apple retailer to purchase your favorite software titles today.

After purchase, complete this form, making sure to correctly indicate the offer code for each product you purchase (see sample below). Return this form, along with your proof(s) of purchase to: Apple Software Rebate Center, P.O. Box 5872, Denver, CO 80217. You will receive your rebate or premium in eight to ten weeks.

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Offer Code 120
Where's Waldo?

Offer Code Number

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Product Name

All offers good only in the United States and only for Macintosh versions of software. All offers good for purchases made through Jan. 31, 1996. Offers cannot be combined with any other offer. This form and a copy of the store receipt for the purchase of qualifying software product(s) must accompany all entries. All entries must be postmarked by Feb. 28, 1996. If you have not received your rebate after ten weeks, call 1 800 681-8843. Rebate payments made in U.S. Dollars. Apple Computer, Inc., is not responsible for lost or misdirected mail. Void where prohibited. Each software developer is responsible for fulfillment of any and all redemption of offers for its product(s) which result from inclusion in this guide, or participation in this program. All costs associated with redemption of offers (excluding shipping and handling charges, where applicable) are the responsibility of each software developer.

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- Purchase any of the products in this guide from any software retailer—there's no limit!
- Complete the product name and offer code on this form for **each** product purchased (feel free to make copies of this form as necessary)
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- Mail to: Apple Software Rebate Center, P.O. Box 5872, Denver, CO 80217. Must be postmarked by Feb. 28, 1996

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Redemption Coupon

# Where to purchase your software.

To take advantage of the special mail-in rebates, premium offers, and special deals inside, purchase your software at *any* software retail store. To help, we've listed a few authorized Apple retailers who carry a wide selection of Macintosh software.



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**Computer City** 



**Best Buy** 



**Micro Center** 



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Rockwell
Computer and Software



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J&R Computer World



**Creative Computers** 



Incredible Universe



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Sun Super Saving Centers

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# HOLIDAY GUIDAY GUIDAY

Take a good look: These 85 names will be turning up on a lot of wish lists this season. By Stephen Brewer

We know it's the thought that counts, but for most of us, if we ever unwrap a ribboned box and see another tie, sweater, scarf or pair of gloves, it'll be too soon.

This year, do your friends and relatives a favor and surprise them with something new: computer-related gifts hand-picked to tickle their fancy. If you don't know where to start, just turn the page: We've got 85 suggestions that are sure to make someone on your list smile. First, there's our collection of 42 new products: Try the Sting



and Screeners programs for music lovers, Michelangelo and van Gogh CD-ROMs for art aficionados, travel softwarc for globe-trotters. You'll also see rec-

ommendations for Internet fun, hobby and sports software, games for kids of all ages and more. Then, we rounded up the 43 programs that earned perfect scores from our reviewers in 1995—see the list on page 159. And if you're really stuck for a gift? Hmmm...we hear magazine subscriptions make nice stocking stuffers...



### **Battle Beast**

Anyone who loves Mortal Kombat or Street Fighter will go wild for the animation and non-stop action in this fearsome fight game. The goal: Destroy the Evil Toadman. The weapons: freeze rays. flamethrowers, pulverizing plasma bursts—and 300 gut-wrenching sound effects. Parental guidance suggested. \$49.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from 7th Level, (800) \$84-8863, (214) 498-8100. Circle #421



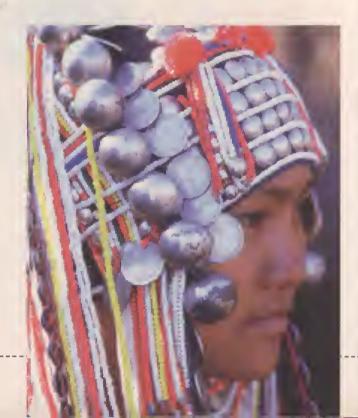
# GARRIE GRACIE GALLO GALLO

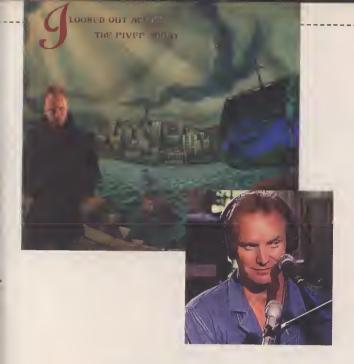
# College Sports Series

After the last teams march off the field on Bowl day, your favorite gridiron fan will be happy to dish up these six programs: CD-ROMs spotlighting football at Florida State, Notre Dame. Ohio State, Penn State, the University of Michigan and the University of Southern California. The discs include video, photos, bios, stats, and, to keep up school spirits until the next kickoff, marching bands and cheerleaders. \$59.95 each (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Stella Interactive, (\$00) 619-4691, (619) 431-\$221. Circle #422

# **Beyond the Nine Dragons**

Take a captivating digital journey down the Mekong River through China, Burma, Laos, Thailand. Cambodia and Vietnam—a trip that's as enlightening as it is beautiful. Narrated photos and videos combine with local music to provide insights into each nation's people, history and culture. If you want to get a closer look, the Explorer's Guide is filled with tips for vacationers; it's a must for any Asia-bound traveler. \$9.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Maciutosh CD-ROM) from The Black Box, by mail-order only: Essex Interactive, 560 Sylvan Are., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632. Circle #423



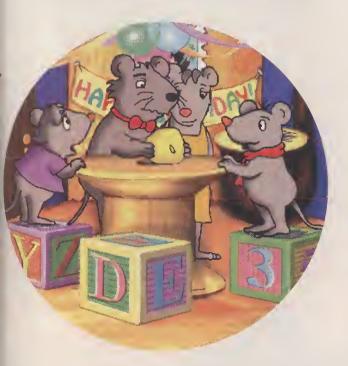


### All This Time

Fans of Sting's music would have welcomed the singer's multimedia debut just for its new songs and re-interpretations of old favorites. But add the insights into his art Sting provides in conversations about his life, his spiritual and political views, his film career and, of course, his music, and it's an obvious gift choice for admirers. The video, animation and photorealistic images on the two-disc set are as compelling as the songs, which are keyed to beautiful landscapes that reflect the music's themes. \$49.95 (Windows 95 CD-ROM) from Starwave, (206) 957-2000. Circle #424

# Sportster 28,800 Data/Fax Modem

Any Net surfer on your list will covet a high-speed 28.8-Kbps modem such as this one, which rockets its user through cyberspace twice as fast as a 14.4-Kbps model. Cybernauts will zip from Web site to Web site, where they'll be able to upload graphics or download files and games in a flash. \$279 from U.S. Robotics, (\$00) 342-5877, (708) 676-7010. Circle #425



# III: Rohaties

# Marty and the Trouble With Cheese

Kids have always jabbered away at cartoons on the screen—and finally, we've found a character who talks back. In the first voice-activated software game for children, kids call through a microphone to Marty Mouse, who pops out from a piece of Swiss cheese to interact with players in a variety of engaging ways—he'll ask them, for instance, to help him sail across a lake by blowing as hard as they can. If only all computer mice were this friendly... Ages 2 to 5. \$34.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Maxis, (800) 336-2947, (510) 254-9700. Circle #426





# Sony Music Screeners

Know anyone who loves watching MTV as much as using the PC? Sereeners split the difference: Each sereen saver includes a video by a popular singer or band, such as Aliee in Chains, Michael Jackson, Mariali Carey, Michael Bolton and James Taylor, as well as two games, on a floppy disk—that's right, full-motion video, no CD-ROM required. \$12.98 each (Windows) from Sony Music, (212) 833-8000. Circle #428

## Cities Under the Sea

Seuba divers, snorkelers and anyone else faseinated with the singular ceology of a eoral reef will dive eagerly into this dazzling CD-ROM. Jean-Miehel Cousteau and his team of scientists and photographers have packed seven undersea labs' worth of information into this multimedia project. Narrated video and stunning photos provide an unforgettable portrait of animals and plants living and working together in harmony. \$49.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from Enteractive, (800) 591-6100, (212) 221-6559. Circle #427



# 3D Movie Maker

Steven Spielberg, look out! This program puts youngsters in the director's chair to audition stars, pick costumes and props, choose sets, maneuver camera angles, select scores and sound effects—even record their own dialogue and original music. From the beginning of production to the final cut, youngsters call the shots to create a 3-D animated movie. Ages 8 and up. \$49.95

(Windows 95 CD-ROM) from Microsoft, (800) 426-9400, (206) \$82-8080. Circle #429



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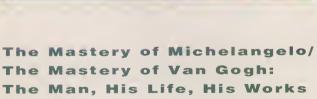
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# The Magic School Bus Explores the Oceans

Fans of Ms. Frizzle and her inquisitive class—stars of the popular book and PBS TV series—will plunge into this undersea adventure, which proves fun and learning can go hand in hand. As kids hunt for sunken treasure, they learn all about tidal zones, coral reefs and other aspects of ocean life. Ages 6 to 10. \$49.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from Microsoft, (\$00) 426-9400, (206) \$82-\$080. Circle #431



Never-before-reproduced works by Michelangelo from the Vatican collection and a walk through the French village where van Gogh spent his last days are among the treasures on these two beautifully produced CD-ROMs. Each disc uses stunning images and insightful commentary to shape portraits any art lover will savor. \$59.95 each (Windows CD-ROM) from E.M.M.E. Interactive, (203) 406-4040. Circle #432





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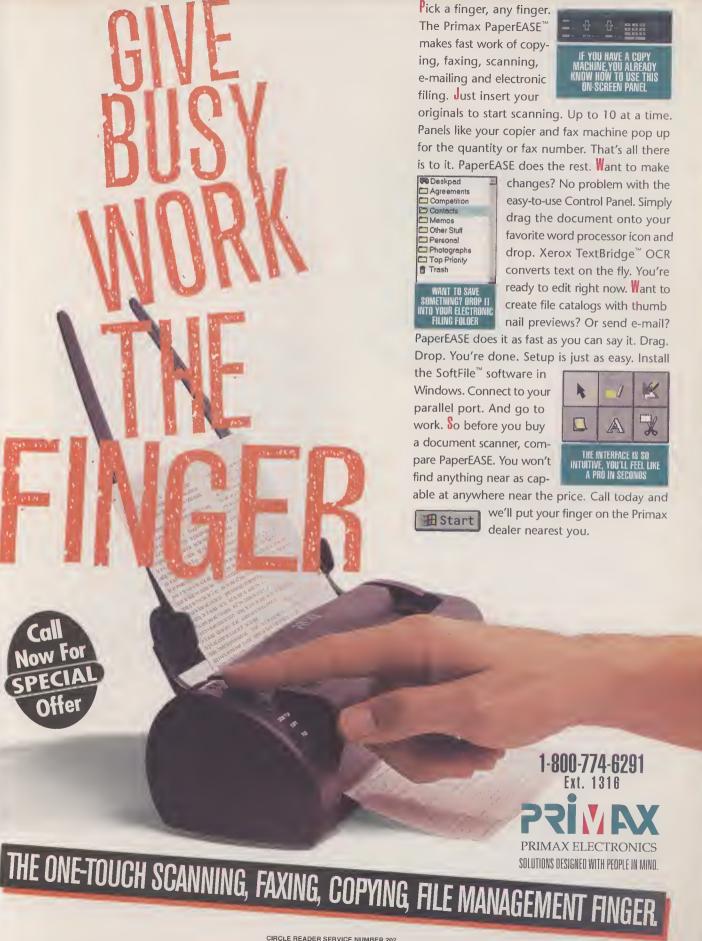
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### Top Gun: Fire At Will

If they can't get enough of the movie, they're bound to go over the top with this realistic dogfight game that puts players in the cockpit of an F-14 fighter jet. The authentic-looking flying seenes use live-action video cuts from Tom Cruise's '80s hit. Novices will find it easy to jump right into the thick of battle, yet the fast action will also satisfy experienced flight-sim fans. \$48.99 (DOS CD-ROM) from Spectrum HoloByte, (800) 695-4263, (510) 522-3584. Circle #434



### **Family Christmas**

Let your PC help spread some yuletide cheer; this holiday organizer will keep track of your card and gift lists, store festive holiday recipes and record special memories in a diary. To brighten your own holiday around the house, there are seasonal screen savers and wallpaper, an Advent calendar and a game for kids called Santa's Sleigh Ride. \$19.95 (Windows, Windows CD-ROM) from FamilyWare, (\$00) 313-7333, (604) 983-8469. Circle #433



### Eastwood

Go ahead, make someone's day! Film clips, posters, original movie reviews, home movies and loads of other Clint memorabilia trace the actor's +0-year, 53-movie eareer, from Revenge of the Creature (1955) to The Bridges of Madison County (1995). Plus, in an exclusive interview, the actor-director-producer shares inside stories about his life and career. \$49.95 (Windows 95 CD-ROM) from Starwave, (\$00) 457-\$646, (206) 957-2000. Circle #435

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### Scenes Personal Screen Saver

Why let your favorite pictures gather dust in a drawer when you can turn them into PC screen savers or wall-paper and enjoy them every day? It's also a snap to add titles and captions to create a digital photo album. To get you rolling, the package includes a conpon for 10 free photo or slide scans. \$29.95 (Windows) from Microsoft, (800) 426-9400, (206) 882-8080. Circle #436



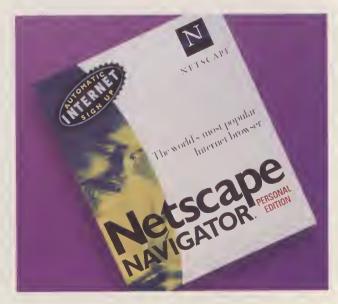
### Netscape Navigator Personal Edition

Launch someone you love into cyberspace with the best software we've seen for surfing the Web. Netscape's highly acclaimed Web browser takes just minutes to install, and with the click of a button you can choose your own service provider. The program, which includes e-mail connections and technical support, makes cruisin' the information highway a breeze. \$39.95 (Windows) from Netscape Communications, (800) 638-7483, (415) 528-2555. Circle #438



### Animated StoryBook: Winnie the Pooh and the Honey Tree

A.A. Milne's lovable characters come alive in this CD-ROM, which features animation from the original Walt Disney eartoon. Pooh and his delightful pals take your kids along on interactive adventures in the Hundred-Acre Wood. With charming narration in both English and Spanish, sing-along screens and fun skill-building games, it's a honey of a deal. Ages 3 to S. \$29.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from Disney Interactive, (\$00) 688-1520, (\$18) 543-4300. Circle #437



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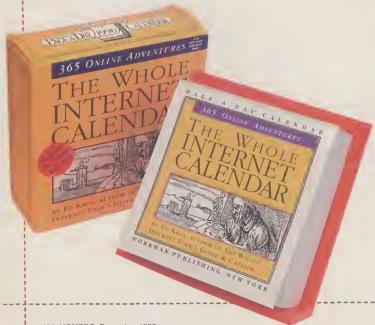






### The Masters

Send the golfer in your life on a tour of the remarkable Augusta National Colf Course, which hosts the sport's most prestigious tournament, The Masters. It's a whole archive in one: 60 years of legendary moments recalled in video clips, photos, player profiles, analyses of each event and other memorabilia. \$39.99 (Windows CD-ROM) from Creative Multimedia, (S00) 262-7668, (503) 241-4351. Circle #440



### Cadillacs and Dinosaurs, The Final Cataclysm

Sharp comic-book-style graphics, cool 3-D animation and chilling action will hook avid gamers. The seene's Jurassic, but don't leave the bright-red '53 Caddy in park too long; players must steer feverishly between the legs of dinosaurs and around other obstacles. The mission: Search the jungle for a nuclear reactor and disarm it before it destroys the earth. \$29.99 (DOS CD-ROM) from Rocket Science Games, (S00) 957-6253, (415) 442-5000. Circle #439



### The Whole Internet Calendar

This 1996 desk calendar gives any cyberspace explorer an itinerary for the new year, with descriptions and addresses for a different Internet or Web site every day. If a Web address changes after publication, as occurs frequently, you can e-mail the publisher for the latest update. One caveat: Try to resist the urge to skip ahead; it's all too easy to lose track of time on the Web—and doesn't that defeat the purpose of having a calendar in the first place? \$5.95 from Workman Pubtishing, (212) 254-5900. Circle #441

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### Dr. Seuss's ABC

Wacky characters and super sound effects, from Aunt Annie's Alligator to the Zizzer-Zazzer-Zuzz, make learning the alphabet fun—but it's so charming, adults may want to sit in for a spell, too. Click on a camel on the ceiling and he'll do a conga, while a barber does the boogie-woogie. Odds are, kids will do cartwheels throughout. Ages 3 to 7. \$40 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosli CD-ROM) from Broderbund/Living Books, (\$00) 397-4240, (415) 352-5200. Circle #442



### Fly Fishing: Great Rivers of the West

Here's a catch for your favorite angler: Gorgeous images and the enchanting sounds of rushing waters bring six of the West's most spectacular rivers to life. It's hard not to get hooked on the techniques of fly tying and casting after watching these expert demonstrations in such majestic snrroundings. \$34.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from 111 Publishing, (\$00) +32-1332, (612) 996-6000. Circle #444



### Looney Tunes Animated Screen Saver

Relive the golden age of Warner Bros. cartoons on your PC with all the classic characters: Bugs Bunny and Elmer Fudd, Daffy Duck. Sylvester and Tweety, the Tasmanian Devil, Wile E. Coyote and the Road Runner, and the rest of the Looney Thues gang pop up in 12 gut-busting cartoons anytime you need a break. \$29 (Windows, Macintosh, Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Berkeley Systems. (\$00) \$77-5535, (510) 540-5535. Circle #443



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### Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure

Any Nintendo junkie will have a field day dodging ferocious crocodiles, side-stepping sinkholes, avoiding killer skeletons and swinging through the perilous jungle in this new adventure written for Windows 95. All 13 levels of play are souped up with awesome visual and audio effects. \$39.95 (Windows 95 CD-ROM) from Activision, (\$00) 477-3650, (\$10) 473-9200. Civcle #446



### **PerfectWorks for Kids**

It's never too early to teach kids basic computer skills, and here's a great way to start. In one of the first Windows 95 products for children, kids can write (spell-checker included), draw and paint, access America Online, and fax or e-mail their creations to friends, or to mom and dad at the office. The program promises to appeal to boys and girls of different backgrounds and nationalities. Ages 4 to 10. \$49.95 (Windows 95 CD-ROM) from Novell, (\$00) 451-5151, (\$01) 225-5000. Civcle #445



### **Pathways Through Jerusalem**

Dramatic re-enactments of great moments in the holy eity's history, an interactive timeline, video tours and waves of fascinating facts capture this 3,000-year-old melting pot of religions and cultures in all its richness. Choose a Christian, Jewish, Muslim or nondenominational on-screen guide to help you explore the two-dise set. \$69.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Future Vision Multimedia, (\$00) 472-\$777, (914) 426-0400. Circle #447

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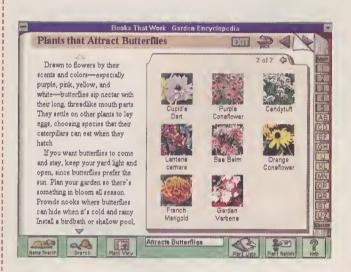
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### Endorfun

Send someone's senses spinning with these wildly addictive arcade-style puzzles set against various psychedelic backgrounds. All the mesmerizing, heart-racing action is balanced with an original New Age sound-track—and each time you complete a game, you're rewarded with a supportive message of peace, love or understanding. "Expect the best." \$29.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from Time Warner Interactive, (\$00) 693-3253, (\$18) \$41-0737. Circle #448



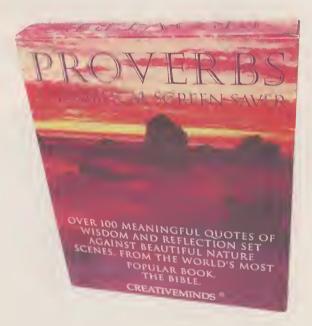
### Proverbs: The Biblical Screen Saver

Take a break to reflect on the meaning of the holidays with more than 100 evocative quotes from Proverbs. Ecclesiastes, Matthew and Corinthians—including the words of Jesus Christ, Paul the Apostle and King Solomon. The selections pop up in front of gorgeous nature photos, accompanied by stirring music. There's even room to add your own favorite passages from the Bible. \$30 (Windows), \$40 (Windows CD-ROM) from Creative-minds, (800) 701-0889, (310) 473-1343. Circle #450



### Garden Encyclopedia

Backyard gardeners will have an easier row to hoe thanks to the powerful search tools on this handy CD-ROM guide. Search the more-than-1,000 plants in the reference—all lusciously illustrated with color photographs—by color, bloom season, sun and soil conditions, or hardiness zones to find the right match for any garden. The How-to Guide includes narrated videos on selecting and caring for plants. \$49.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from Books That Work, (800) 242-4546, (415) 326-4280. Circle #449



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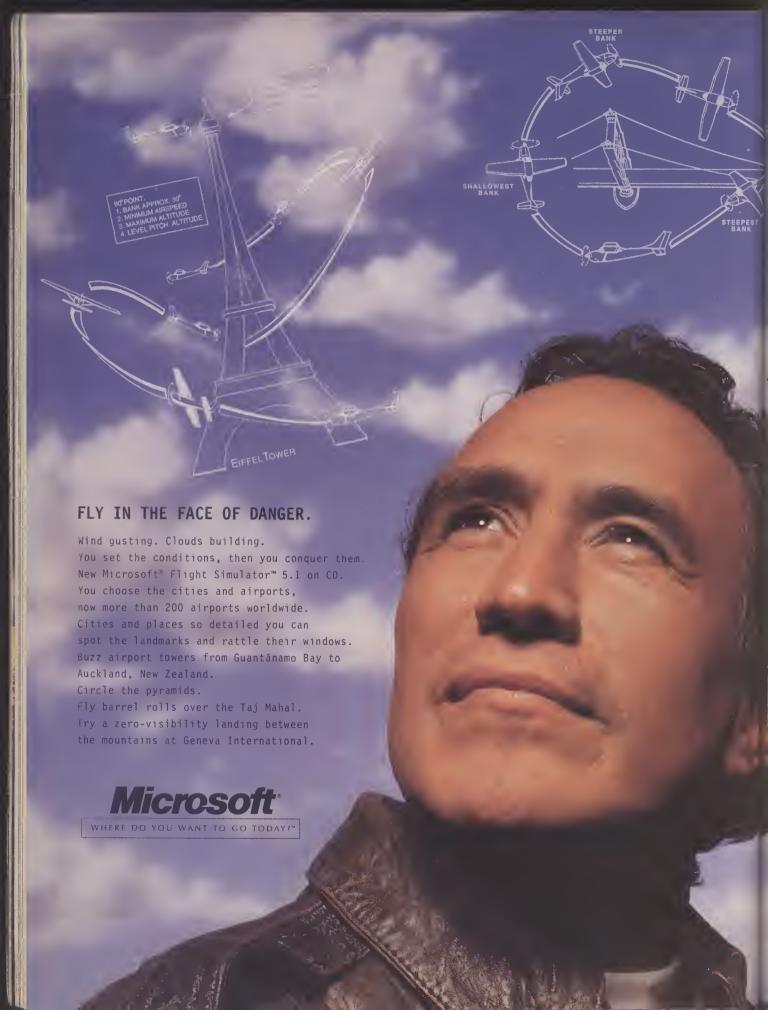
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It has already become a "must have", for trackball users seeking a high land of multiplication. PageScan<sup>TN</sup> Color, our 24-bit color, boardless, sheetfed scanner, took the market by storm in September. With industry-leading took the market by storm in September. With Industry-leading and text, filling faxing and integrated software for scanning images and text, filling faxing integrated software for scanning pagescan Color soft a manuscripe pagescan c high level of reliability and accuracy. integrated software for scanning images and text, filling faxing, and copying and its low street price, Pagescan Color set a new standard copying and its low street price, imaging devices in affordable multi-function imaging devices. By integrating hardware with powerful software, Logitech products by integrating naraware with powerful software, Logitech products

are designed to add value by enhancing the computing experience The

individual nears. They're both approachable and a pleasure to use they are the they are the are they are in affordable, multi-function imaging devices. are designed to add value by ennancing the computing experience for individual users. They're both approachable and a pleasure to use. The individual users. They're both approachable and a pleasure of incommon and individual users. individual users. They're both approachable and a pleasure to use. The marriage of innovation, "magic" of our products comes from the marriage of innovation, "magic" of our products comes from the marriage of innovation, and loading address to be a second to the marriage of the complete of the marriage of the complete of the complet \*\*magic" of our products comes from the marriage of innovation, a unique combination a unique combination a unique design, and leading-edge technology—a unique control device and attractive design, and leadership accirion in the control device and attractive design, and leadership accirion in the control device and attractive design, and leadership accirion in the control device. attractive design, and leading edge rechnology—a unique combination in the control device and responsible for our leadership Position in the control device and responsible for our leadership position in the control device and an incorposition of industry, our responsible for our leadership position in the control device and an incorposition of industry, our responsible for our leadership position in the control device and an incorposition of the control device and an incorposition of the control device and an incorposition of the control device and the control device responsible for our requersing position in the control device and remarkers, and an impressive array of industry awards over imaging markers, and an impressive array of industry to describe the work in a feet to be a feet to b imaging markets, and an impressive array of industry awards over the word "cool" to describe the the years. In fact, people often use the word the years in fact, people on the years. une years. In Tack, people often use the word choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which our contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which contemporary look, feel, styling and variety of choices which contemporary look, feel, styling and choices which contemporary look, feel, styling and choices which contemporary look, styling and choices which contemporary "I love your products!" is also a phrase we frequently hear. As a result, we've taken a new direction with our advertising the different ways a result, we've taken a new direction with our advertising, emphasize this characteristic of our products and showing the different ways this characteristic of our products and showing the ways are this characteristic of our products and showing the different ways this characteristic of our products and showing the different ways are the characteristic of our products and showing the different ways are the characteristic of our products and showing the different ways are the characteristic of our products and showing the different ways are the characteristic of our products and showing the different ways are the characteristic of our products and showing the different ways are the characteristic of our products and showing the different ways are the characteristic of our products and showing the different ways are the characteristic of our products and showing the different ways are the characteristic of our products and showing the different ways. LOCITECH this characteristic of our products and snowing the different was that individual users love specific Logitech products. We make that individual users love specific Logitech products. products provide. Look for our innovative products and our new tagline and join Look for our innovative products and our new tagine—and loin love!

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Get new Microsoft Flight Simulator 5.1. It's as close to reality as you want to get.





### ClickArt: Bundle Up for the Holidays

Desktop publishers will find it easier than ever to create festive greeting cards, party invitations, newsletters and fliers with this package of more than 400 seasonal images and 20 TrueType fonts. There are graphics galore to help you celebrate Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year's, and even that noted January holiday, the Super Bowl. \$19.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Maciutosh CD-ROM) from T/Maker, (\$00) 692-0195, (\$15) 691-7762. Circle \$#452



### Star Trek Omnipedia

Beam your favorite Trekker into seventh heaven with the last word in *Star Trek* minutiae. The program (voice-activated, for a totally futuristic experience) covers every episode, every human and alien, and every topic ever discussed on the *Enterprise* in the original series. *The Next Generation* and the first season of *Deep Space Nine*. \$79.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from Simon and Schuster Interactive, (\$00) 223-2336, (212) 698-7456. Circle #451



### Air & Space Smithsonian: Dreams of Flight

Would-be pilots will flip—literally—for this program's Acrobatic Flight Simulator, which lets you experience the death-defying stunts of the old barnstorming days. Too young to remember them? Check out the 50 minutes of film, audio recordings of witnesses to great moments in aviation history, 2-D explorations of 65 historic aircraft, and a section on how flight touched the lives of ordinary people long before the invention of multimedia simulation. \$29.99 (Windows CD-ROM) from Creative Multimedia, (800) 262-7665, (503) 241-4351, Circle #453



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Explore a Native American village. Help the settlers discover a new world. Build a wigwam. Search for wild animals.

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child can read and discover in Disney's new Animated StoryBook Pocahontas, a CD-ROM experience through the landscape and characters of Pocahontas. At the click of a mouse, you bring to life hundreds of Disney animations on sixteen interactive screens. Two unique panoramas let you experience settler and Native American communities in amazing detail. Stimulate your mind and tickle your funny bone with four multi-level games. Relive your favorite scenes, discovering new things

every time you play. It's the magic of Disney, and it's right at your fingertips.

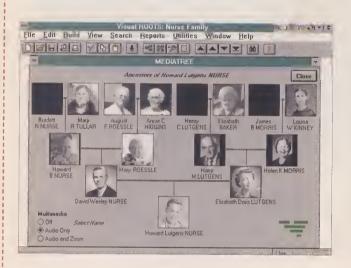
ONCE AGAIN, THE MAGIC OF DISNEY BEGINS WITH A MOUSE.





### Doonesbury Screen Saver

You might feel a tad guilty giving someone these 10 brilliant, totally intense examples of cutting-edge satire. After all, who's going to be able to get down to serious business on the computer with so much distracting fun on the screen? Perhaps it'll ease your mind to know that all proceeds will be donated to environmental and human-rights causes. \$34.99 (Windows, Windows CD-ROM) from Mindscape, (\$00) 234-3088, (415) \$97-9900. Circle #454



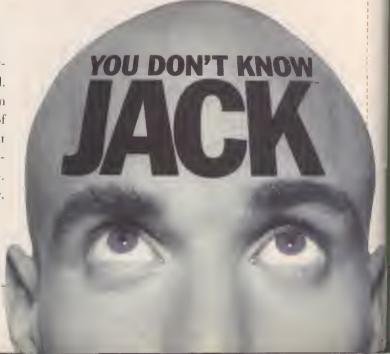


### **Visual Roots**

Here's a gift for the whole family—including the generations to come. This genealogy program offers a safe place to store family and medical histories, photos, video clips, audio recordings, personal reminiscences, birth and marriage certificates, and other important documents. It's not just a family tree—it's more like a multimedia forest of genealogical information. \$49.95 (Windows) from CommSoft, (\$00) 327-6687, (707) \$35-4300. Circle #455

### You Don't Know Jack

This irreverent trivia game will liven up any gathering, making it a great gift for laughs all year round. Up to four players can compete to answer more than 800 hilarious questions that test their knowledge of pop culture. Contestants experience all the excitement of being on a TV quiz show, right down to the wisecracks they must endure from a smart-aleck emcec. \$29.99 (Windows CD-ROM) from Berkeley Systems, (\$00) 344-5541, (\$10) 549-2300. Circle #456



### INTRODUCING A JUNGLE GYM FOR THE MIND.

ACTIVITY CENTER

Thanks to Disney's new interactive CD-ROM, "The Lion King Activity Center", your kids can play for hours on end with Simba and his friends. There are nine exciting and challenging activities, which inspire children to learn and use their creativity. As they master each one, they can increase the difficulty so they'll never run out of fun things to do. It's bound to be the best workout your kids will ever have.



Matching



Art Studio



Hidden Animals



Music games



**Puzzles** 



Memory



Mazes



Achi

CD-ROM for Windows, Windows 95, and Macintosh



Spelling

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CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 25





### The Day After Trinity

It's not the cheeriest subject for holiday time, but serious history buffs will be faseinated by the full-screen version of this Oscar-nominated 1980 film about J. Robert Oppenheimer and the development of the atomic bomb, with running commentary by the film's director. Thanks to the multimedia treatment, viewers can call up FBI files, documents from the Manhattan Project, and 100 haunting black-and-white photos. \$29.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Voyager, (800) 446-2001, (914) 591-5500. Circle #458



### Dogz, Your Computer Pet

How cute is that doggy in the window? (Your PC window, that is.) These computerized canines nap quietly in the corner of your screen and will perform dozens of tricks on command. Magically, the pups grow up before your eyes, reaching maturity 30 days after installation—no housebreaking required! There's a variety of different breeds, and you can check out the pups on the Internet at www.pfmagic.com/dogz/adopt before you "adopt." \$19.95 each (Windows) from PF. Magic, (800) 482-3678, (415) 495-0400. Circle #457

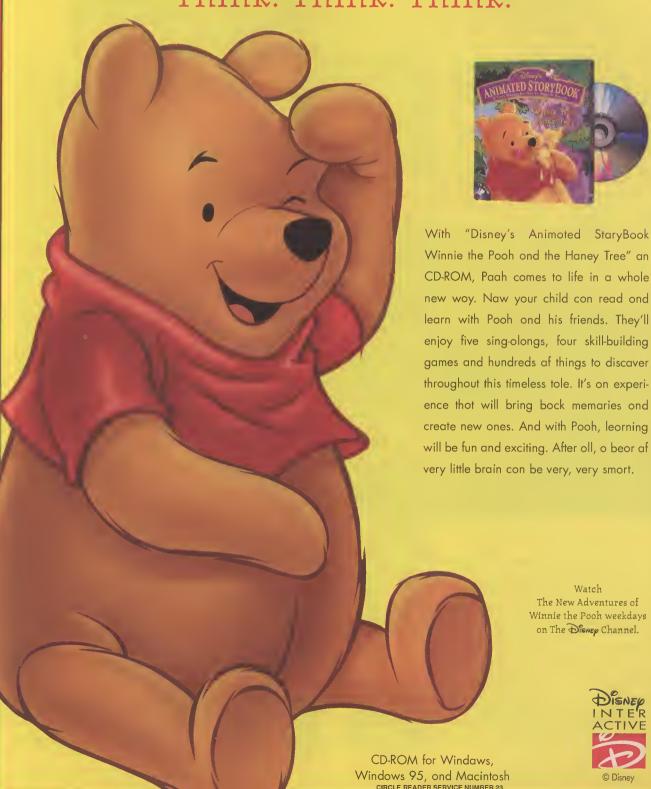


### Voyage Through the Wonders of Italy

Armchair travelers will relish every step as they wander the bridges and canals of Venice, and the streets of Florence, Rome and Sienna—without budging from their computers. Beautiful photographs, videos, interactive maps and drawings explore the country's art, architecture, landscapes and history, to the accompaniment of the music of Vivaldi, Rossini, Verdi and other Italian master composers. \$59.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from E.M.M.E. Interactive, (203) 406-4040. Circle #459

### What's the best way to share a childhood memory with your child?

Think. Think. Think.



The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh weekdays





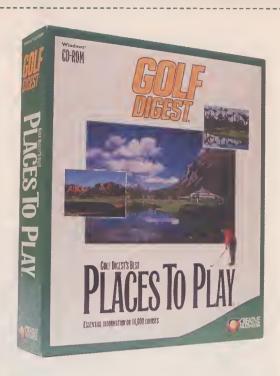
### Golf Digest's Best Places to Play

As any golfer will tell you, some courses are to die for. To find such links to heaven, this multimedia program features videos, photos and all the facts on 14,000 fairways and greens in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean. It also gives forcthought to the 1,700 Best Places to Play and the Best 18 Holes You Can Play. \$29.99 (Windows CD-ROM) from Creative Multimedia, (\$00) 262-7668, (\$503) 241-4351. Circle #460



### Le Louvre—the Palace and Its Paintings

Even if a trip to Paris isn't in your plans, you can enjoy the wonders of the Louvre by examining 100 treasured paintings on your computer; highlight the details or see the works in the full screen. The magnificent architectural details of the palace itself also appear in multimedia splendor. \$49.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosli CD-ROM) from BMG Interactive and Montparnesse Multimedia, (212) 930-6768. Circle #462

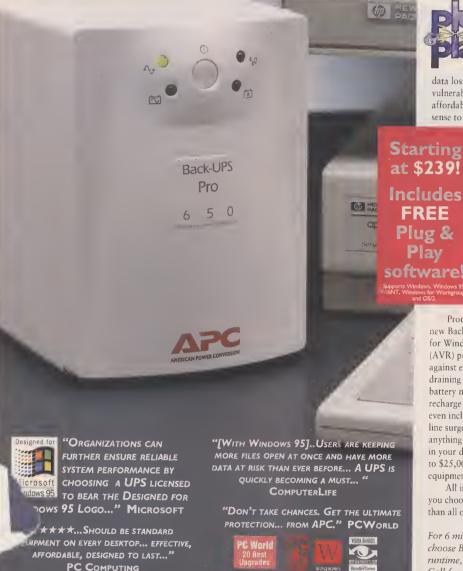


### **Explore the Grand Canyon**

This interactive magic-carpet ride is the next best thing to visiting the national wonder: Soar over towering buttes, zoom in for a close look at the Inner Gorge and float down the mighty Colorado River. All told, the spectacular photographs, videos, 3-D models, voice-overs and original music make this virtual tour a real trip. \$49.99 (Windows CD-ROM) from the Coriolis Group, (\$00) 410-0192, (602) 483-0192. Circle #461



### Windows 95 puts the power of a server on your PC. The new Plug & Play Back-UPS Pro™ will keep it there...



If you're about to invest in a new multi-tasking operating system like Windows 95, experts say it may be time to invest in APC protection. Why? Because bad power is the largest single cause of

data loss, and on a multi-tasking system, your vulnerability is multiplied. When full protection is as affordable as a new mouse, it just doesn't make sense to leave your premium machine unprotected.



You get safe automatic shutdown (whether you're there or not), power event recording for power quality analysis, real-time display of UPS status, and certified Windows 95 Plug & Play compatibility for easy installation.

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All in all, you can't make a bad choice when you choose the company that protects more PC's than all other UPS vendors combined: APC.

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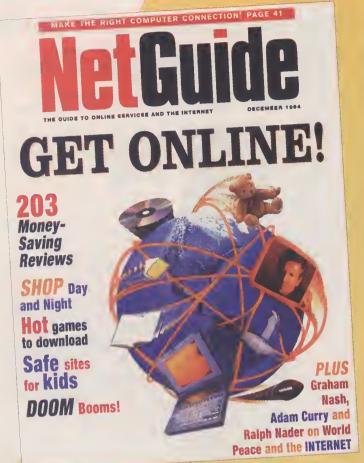
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These amazing color flatbed scanners include *ScanWizard*, Microtek's easy-to-use scanner

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Microteh PageWiz is a personal page scanner

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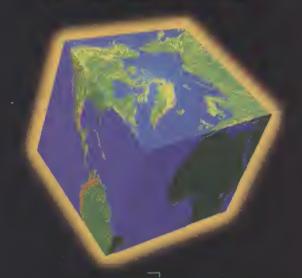


Your kids may actually start to enjoy their homework assignments when they find out how easy it is to add drawings or photos to their term papers or other school reports.



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The items on the previous pages highlight the best of what's new in stores this season. But as you shop, don't overlook standont programs reviewed earlier this year. To refresh your memory, here's a list of all 43 software releases that won perfect four-star ratings in *HomePC* in 1995. This roundup of the most creative and well-designed games, education programs, and reference and hobby software includes updated prices, ordering information, suggested ages for the kids' programs and the month of each review—so you can see for yourself why we think these will make great gifts.



### **FUN AND GAMES**

### Discworld

Psygnosis, (800) 438-7794, (617) 497-5457 \$59.99 (DOS CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) July (Circle #479)

### Flight Unlimited

Looking Glass Technologies, (617) 441-6333 \$59.95 (DOS CD-ROM) September (Circle #480)

### **Lode Runner**

Sierra On-Line. (800) 757-7707, (206) 649-9800 \$44.95 (DOS, Windows, Macintosh) \$49.95 (DOS CD-ROM, Windows CD-ROM) January (Circle #481)



### Monty Python's Complete Waste of Time

7th Level, (800) SS4-SS63, (214) 437-4555 \$59.95 (Windows CD-ROM) February (Circle #482)

### **Triazzle**

Berkeley Systems, (800) 308-6278, (510) 540-5535 \$39.95 (Windows, Macintosh) August (Circle #483)

### **Under a Killing Moon**

Access Software, (S00) S00-4S80, (S01) 359-2900 \$99.95 (DOS CD-ROM) February (Circle #484)

### KID RAVES

### **Alien Tales**

Broderbund Software, (\$00) 521-6263, (#15) 382-#600 \$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) Ages 9 to 13 July (Circle #485)



Opcode Interactive, (800) 557-2633, (415) 494-1112 \$59.95 (Windows CD-ROM) Ages 3 to 6 February (Circle #486)

### **Art Explorer Deluxe**

Adobe Systems, (800) S33-6687, (415) 961-4400 \$49.95 (Macintosh CD-ROM) Ages 8 and up November (Circle #487)

### **Brimax Learning Together: The Rabbits at Home**

Reed Interactive, (800) 308-6353, (301) 601-2159 \$59.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) Ages 3 and up March (Circle #488)

### **ECO East Africa**

IVI Publishing, (800) 432-1332, (612) 996-6000 \$47.95 (Windows CD-ROM) Ages 14 and up August (Circle #489)





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CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 50







### Freddi Fish and the Case of the Missing Kelp Seeds

Humongous Entertainment, (206) 485-1212 \$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM) Ages 4 to 9 April (Circle #490)

### Flying Colors

Davidsou & Associates, (500) 545-7677, (310) 793-0600 \$49.75 (Windows, Macintosh, Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) Ages 8 and up February (Circle #491)

**Harry and the Haunted House** 

Broderbund's Living Books, (\$00) 521-6263, (\$15) 3\$2-7\$1\$ \$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) Ages 3 to 8 January (Circle #492)

**How Many Bugs in a Box?** 

Simon & Schuster Interactive \$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) Ages 3 to 6 September (Circle #493)

### Interactive Reading Journey

The Learning Company, (800) \$52-2255, (510) 792-2101 \$89 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) Ages 4 to 7 January (Circle #494)



**JumpStart First Grade** 

Knowledge Adventure, (\$00) 542-4240, (\$15) 542-4200 \$54.95 (Windows CD-ROM) Ages 5 to 6 November (Circle #495)

### **Kid Phonics**

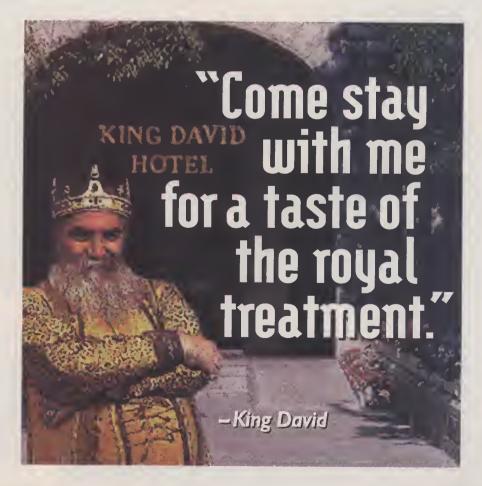
Davidsou & Associates, (800) 545-7677, (310) 793-0600 \$59.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) Ages 4 to 7

Ages 4 to 7 June (Circle #496)

### **Kids World**

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Sierra On-Line, (S00) 757-7707, (206) 649-9500 \$44.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) Ages 12 and up October (Circle #499)

Math Blaster Mystery: The Great Brain Robbery

Davidsou & Associates, (800) 545-7677, (310) 793-0600 \$40 (Windows CD-ROM) Ages 10 and up August (Circle #500)



Memphis Math: Treasure of the Tombs

WordPerfect Main Street, (800) 526-5225, (801) 225-5000 \$49 (Windows CD-ROM) Ages 8 to 14 February (Circle #501)

**My Favorite Monster** 

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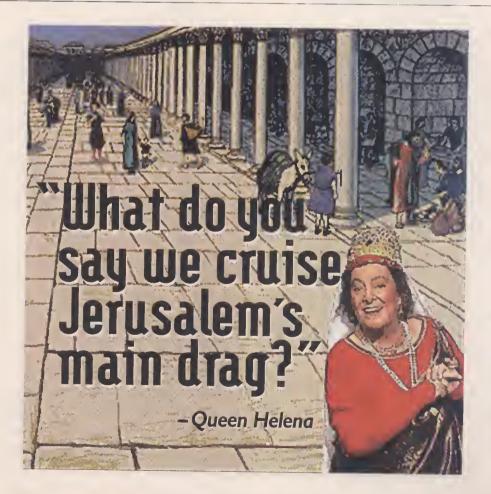
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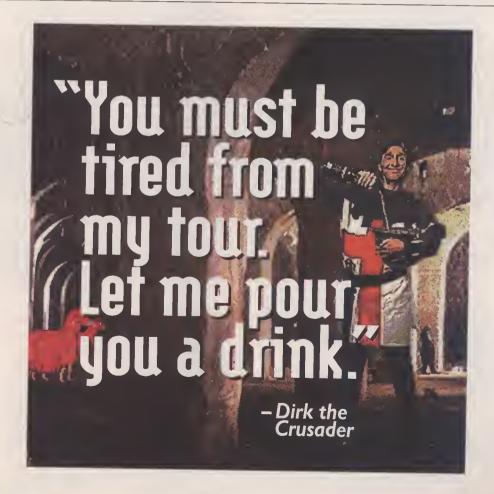
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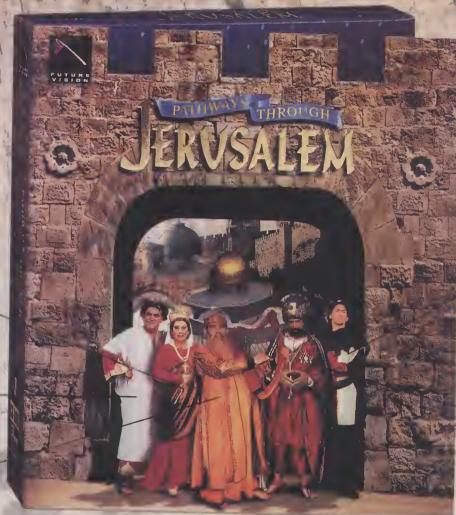
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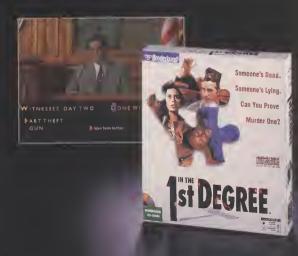
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exclusive survey: the state of

BY JOHN ECKHOUSE

Lois Boullion divides her family's software library into two piles: "I have a box of programs that work and another filled with those that don't. I don't know why I'm pay-

ing for programs my kids ean't use." Yet Lois no longer bothers to ask software companies to support the programs they sell—she says she's spent too many days

Wittosey

When Intuit

ignored Jim Hunt's

dumped Quicken and

bought a rival

program.

listening to a busy signal, or waiting on hold for 30 minutes only to have a support teclmician suggest fixes she's already tried. "I just can't stand dealing with them anymore," says the Tripoli, lowa, factory supervisor bluntly.

Jim Hunt has had better luck. He's owned a computer for eight years, and the Jackson, Mich., car salesman is grateful that "in all that time, with all my software, I've only had to call a company for help one

time." But that experience is not one he'd care to repeat. When Jim called Intuit for help with his Quicken program, the company immediately replaced repeated calls, he finally one of his software disks, saying it was probably defective. When the new disk didn't solve his problem, he called Intuit several times and got no response. So what did he do? "I threw the software away and

bought a competitor's program."

Odds are many of you can relate to what Lois and Jim have felt. When *HomePC* asked readers to share their software-support experiences with us in a recent survey, we received 4,000 responses (see methodology sidebar on page 174) that held numerous tales of software woe. Respondents complained of waiting far too long to get problems solved and lamented the quality of the support they ultimately received from software manufacturers. Two of every five readers (41 percent) reported problems with software in the past year that led them to seek assistance. Of that group, on average, readers reported problcms with two programs.

Our readers encountered technical problems with so many titles from so many different manufacturers that it was impossible to determine with statistical accuracy which software companies have provided the best support for their products, as we did when we ranked companies for hardware reliability and support (see "The Best PC Support," November 1995). But we can draw a number of telling conclusions about overall trends and how some of the largest software companies have performed: It's clear the industry could do better.

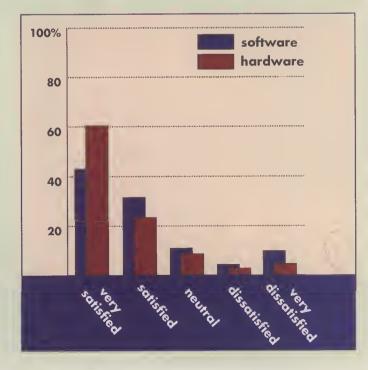
#### Problems come fast, help is slow

More than 80 percent of people who reported software problems faced them during the eagerly anticipated moments when they first tried to use a new program. This was particularly vexing to parents who watched their children's faces sink from delighted anticipation to disappointment. On average, owners of programs from Disney Interactive, Sierra On-Line and IBM reported more problems in the early going than Microsoft and Intuit customers.

Nearly all software programs come with manuals, but readers seem to believe they're

#### readers hold software to a higher reliability standard than PCs

HomePC readers were mostly pleased with their software's reliability. Overall, 74 percent of those polled told us they were satisfied or very satisfied with the reliability of programs they purchased in the past year, compared with 84 percent who said they were satisfied with the reliability of their hardware. That's surprising, because our polls showed that readers ran into far more problems with their PCs than with their software.



#### written on Mars: Only 6 percent of respondents found the manu-

of respondents found the mannal of any use in solving technical snafns. And only 50 percent described the software manual as helpful in directing them to better sources of information, such as phone or on-line support.

Since they couldn't count on the manual, most people—65 percent—next turned to software manufacturers for help; 12 percent went back to the retailer, 12 percent asked friends or relatives for assistance, and 8 percent went to their PC manufacturer.

Phone support caused readers the most grief. When people dial up a company, they expect a person to answer. Failing that, they want to be able to leave a message. Apparently this is news to software companies. Only 14 percent of readers who called a support line say they got through right away. On average, they waited on hold for uine minutes, with one in five waiting 16 minutes or more. IBM and Disney Interactive customers reported much longer-thanaverage waits for their calls to be answered.

#### 1 in 10 has waited a week for software service.

"The first time I called IBM I was on hold for over an hour, which I found rather extreme," says Janrae Frank, a San Jacinto, Calif., writer.

"Somebody would come on the line every once in a while, listen to what I had to say, then pass me to someone else," says Dave Dabay, a Dublin, Va., telecommunications worker. He called Disney Interactive four times and sat on hold between 12 and 20 minutes each time.

But Parsons Technology won many readers' respect for its prompt response. "I got a bad disk that wouldn't boot, so I called Parsons," says Francis Davis, a retiree from Alexandria, Va. "They answered on almost the first ring, immediately sent me a new disk, and it worked."

"I couldn't believe how quickly Parsons answered the phone; I was so used to waiting on hold for a long time when I called Dell," says Sharon Dimascolo, a Cranston, R.I., bookkeeper.

As if getting stuck on hold weren't bad enough, what really got readers' goats was having to pay for the privilege of wasting their own time. Many software companies have pulled the plug on toll-free phone numbers for their support assistance centers. Since most support lines are open only during business hours, long-distance charges can mount up quickly.

Jack Arnold, a retired Bell Labs researcher from Loomis, Calif., spent \$85 on a single transcontinental call to IBM for help with the OS/2 operating system. "I spent more money trying to get 'free' software support than the



When Jim Gallo purchased Disney Interactive's Aladdin Activity
Center last Christmas, he
expected to pop the program into his CD-ROM
drive and watch his kids'

faces light up. But the program crashed, the children were crestfallen, and Jim's anger rose.

It took four phone calls to the company before
Jim learned that the program wouldn't work on his
PC. "Why don't they put everything you need to
know to be able to run the program on the label?"
wonders the Milford, Mich., automotive technician.

Jim's experience is far too common. "Consumers return as many as 40 percent of all the CD-ROMs they purchase," says Ken Christie, vice president of marketing for the Interactive Multimedia Association (IMA) in Annapolis, Md. To improve customer satisfaction—and help boost its members' profits—the IMA has launched a campaign called CD Match. One of its goals is to establish a standard, easily understood CD-ROM label, similar to the Nutrition Facts box that now appears on all food packaging. The label (see prototype below) would clearly indicate on the box the minimum operating system, CPU type and speed, memory, graphics resolution, CD-ROM drive speed, hard disk space, audio specs and any unusual requirements.

You should see the first CD-ROMs bearing the new labels in stores this spring. The IMA also plans to distribute free software that will scan your computer and let you print out a description of its specs in a form that matches the categories on the product label. That list will come in handy at the store, telling you at a glance whether your computer has what it takes to run the CD-ROM you want to buy. —J.E.

IMA Configuration Requirements	
OPERATING SYSTEM	Windows™ 3.1-3.11
CPU TYPE & SPEED	486 DX, 33 MHz
MEMORY	8 MB
GRAPHICS	640 X 480 X 256
CD-ROM SPEED	2X
AVAIL. HARD DRIVE	12 MB
AUDIO	16 BIT, 8 KHz, 22 KHz
OTHER	VFW <sup>TM</sup> 2.1

program cost in the first place," he says.

Toronto accountant Vernon Paige has the same feeling when he calls Computer Associates for help with its Simply Accounting program: "When I make a call to Vancouver—and spend 10 or 20 minutes on hold listening to music I don't like—it gets expensive quickly." Readers said the best thing software manufacturers and retailers could do to improve support would be to provide toll-free phone numbers.

To avoid phone follies, readers are turning to the support that software companies offer on the Internet and commercial on-line services such as America Online, CompuServe and Prodigy. "I've used CompuServe three or four times for inexpensive support," Vernon says. "Microsoft has been excellent in that regard, getting back to me the next morning after I leave a query. That costs maybe 75 cents or a dollar of on-line connect time. I don't mind that."

Most respondents—84 percent—said they were aware of on-line software support, and about one in four of that group had given it a try. Of those who had tried on-line support, more than half said they were satisfied with the service; only 12 percent found it unsatisfactory.

"I thought it was very scary at first, but once you do it, you see there's nothing to it," confides Janice Barta, an Eden Prairie, Minn., homemaker. "I get all my support on-line now. I'd rather post a message and come back at my own convenience than be on hold for 40 minutes the way I used to be with Sierra On-Line and Gateway 2000."

While the number of U.S. homes equipped with a computer and modem is still relatively low—only about 18 percent, according to the annual Odyssey Homefront

Microsoft on-line

support is excellent

says one respondent; he

gets replies overnight,

and it costs only about a

dollar.

Survey conducted by San Francisco market research firm Odyssey—on-line support may be the wave of the future. It's less expensive for software manufacturers and more convenient for customers; 83 percent of the respondents said they were likely to try on-line support in the future.

Faxing a company for help is another option. When Sandi Morton couldn't get through

to Corel on the phone, the Metaline Falls, Wash., computer draftsperson sent a fax outlining her problem and listing her serial number. A technician called Sandi at her office the next day with a solution.

Sandi was more fortunate than most of those

#### how we conducted the 1995 software support survey

HomePC's survey of readers' software-support experiences was a joint effort of the magazine's editorial and research departments, with additional input from PC Data, a market research company in Reston,

Va. The study was conducted in strict accordance with accepted market-research practices.

Postage-paid survey cards were bound into all copies of our July 1995 issue. By the stated July 31 deadline for replies, we had received approximately 4,000 completed reader surveys—a sig-



nificant response for a poll of this type, which typically is based on a response of 500 to 2,000 individuals.

The geographic distribution and demographic makeup of the respondents to this poll mirror HomePC's overall circulation, validating the respondent sample. The margin of error for this sample of

4,000 respondents is plus or minus 2 percent. Respondents encountered technical problems with a wide variety of software titles from many different companies; no program or company received enough mentions to enable us to draw statistically significant conclusions upon which to tabulate a ranking of all companies' software-support performance.

HomePC's editorial staff designed and developed the survey with the assistance and supervision of the magazine's senior research manager, Michael DeMilt, who helped interpret the results. Musick Research Services, an independent research firm in Hackensack, N.J., edited, coded and tabulated the reader responses. —J.E.

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surveyed. On average, it took slightly more than a full day to reach the person who ultimately solved the respondent's software problem; one in 10 people reported waiting a week or more. Disney Interactive and Intuit customers were far more likely than the average respondent to wait longer than a week.

#### Spreading the blame

Many people described their search for assistance as a kind of treadmill run. "When I finally got through to Disney to complain about

their Aladdin package, they blamed my Packard Bell computer," says Dave Dabay. "Packard Bell told me it was a Disney problem. I called Disney back; a weck and several calls later they grudgingly admitted it was a code issue, and they would get a software fix for my sound card. Here I've got a 6-year-old champing at the bit; how can I explain to him that I'm getting the runaround for a week before they give me an answer?" (For one solution to the "runaround" problem, see sidebar below.)

But reaching the right person is only the be-

#### call and response: the rise of independent software hot lines



Tom Palmer was stumped. After hours trying to puzzle out a few confusing features in Microsoft Word and Lotus 1-2-3, he decided to call for help. But the Richmond, Va., banker didn't dial up either Microsoft or Lotus.

Instead, he called PC Helps Support and paid \$2.40 a minute for guidance.

"I was frustrated; then I made one call and got help for both programs," Tom says. "The technician was efficient, and it was well worth the \$15 it cost me when I think about how much I might have spent on long-distance calls to Microsoft or on-line charges for 'free' support."

There's been an upsurge in the number of independent software support lines promising to get callers out of a jam. Software makers have helped fuel their growth by charging customers directly for support, or eliminating toll-free numbers and making callers pay hefty long-distance rates only to wait on hold.

But the primary reason customers are turning to independent support companies may be that most of these services don't point any fingers: If you have a conflict between program A and program B, the technicians will solve it rather than blaming the other company and directing you to call there for help.

"The quality of some of these companies' support is up there with what the software publishers deliver," says Bob Johnson, director of software services for Dataquest, a San Jose, Calif., market research company. "But make sure you know what you're paying for before the meter starts running." For example, find out before you sign up if the service supports the operating system you use, and if it handles conflicts between software and hardware. Here are three other key questions to ask and how some popular services answer them:

• How many software products does the service support? The IBM End User Support Help Desk (800-964-8523) works with more than 700 PC programs; Digital Equipment's Service-in-a-Box (800-888-4234) supports more than 400 PC and Macintosh programs; some services handle fewer than 100 programs.

• When are the help lines open? Software Support (800-756-4463) tackles problems 24 hours a day, seven days a week; PC Helps Support (800-733-2378) is open 12 hours a day, five days a week.

• How much will it cost? Some services charge approximately \$150 a year for an unlimited number of calls; others bill per problem (\$25 is common) or per minute (typically \$2 to \$3).

Sidney Stogel, a partner in a Boston computer consulting company, chose the \$144 annual fee at Service-in-a-Box. He spent 40 minutes on the phone during his first call, when he tried to figure out how to print his Excel spreadsheet in color; he now calls as often as once a month. "They're patient, they ask the right questions, and if they can't figure something out, they research it and call me back in an hour," Sidney says. "It pays for itself in all the time I save during the year." —J.E.

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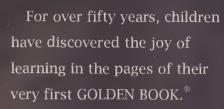
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ginning. It took companies a week on average to solve our readers' software problems—about a day-and-a-half longer than it took to solve hardware problems. Roughly a third of those surveyed said their problem was never resolved to their satisfaction or they were still waiting.

"I got so fed up sitting on the phone for hours trying to get help with Dinosaur Safari from Creative Multimedia that we just don't bother using the game," says Michael Parlberg,

a MeHenry, Ill., police officer.

"I called WordPerfect three or four times over the course of six weeks to see why I couldn't print labels," says Lillian Brady, a Rightstown, N.J., legal secretary. "They tried several things to get my printer to work, then told me to buy WordPerfect 6.1—I'd bought WordPerfect 6.0 just weeks before. I said the heck with it and use a memory typewriter to print my labels."

In about 20 percent of the cases, our readers solved their problems by getting replacement software from either the manufacturer or the retailer that sold them the program. About one in 10 people simply returned the problematic software for a refund or store credit. (CD-ROM manufacturers are taking steps to reduce returns and solve other problems by spelling out a program's hardware requirements clearly on the box; see sidebar on page 173.)

When asked what caused their problem, readers cited conflicts between hardware and software, a piece of faulty software and a conflict between two software programs, in that order. Some of those polled didn't care what

caused their problem as long as the company solved it: One in four said they never found out what caused their software glitch.

Despite all the problems they encountered getting assistance with their software, readers generally praised the support engi-

> neers who tried to help. About three of every four respondents rated the support person's attitude as excellent or very good.

"l've called several game companies, and I've never spoken to anyone who wasn't very, very nice on the phone," says Adrienne Talley, a Deadwood,

S.D., office clerk. "Once you get someone to call you back, the people at Disney are very helpful, " says Larry Haagsma, a manager at a Sparta, Mich., distribution company. Microsoft technicians re-

'Once you get

someone to call you

back, the people at

Disney are very helpful,

says one survey

respondent.

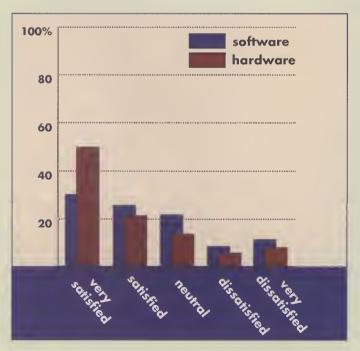
port from a Microsoft technician's point of view, see sidebar on page 182.) On the other hand, many of those polled had negative things to say about their experiences with software-support staffs. One in four rated the support person's ability to solve their problem as unsatisfactory, and a like number found

the length of time the technician took to fix the

ceived much higher-than-average grades for

positive attitude. (For a look at software sup-

#### hardware support staffs get the nod over software counterparts



It's easier to obtain technical support for a PC that's on the fritz than for software that won't work. Fifty-seven percent of those polled said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the software support they received for programs purchased in the past year. But 70 percent were pleased with the support they received for their hardware. And more people were very dissatisfied with software support than with hardware support.

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spaceship flight instruction have you had? None—and you still took on the best enemy pilots in the universe.

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to rhythm & blues.



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Then use your computer keyboard to lay down smokin' solo licks. And you can change instruments, re-mix the song, change tempo,

even switch to a completely different style (how would that country & western song sound as reggae,

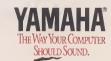


All you need to run Visual Arranger is your computer\* with a sound card or a General MIDI keyboard.



make those, but that's another ad).

So give those aliens, ninjas, gunfighters, and kick-boxers a little time off and run up a score you can really be proud of.





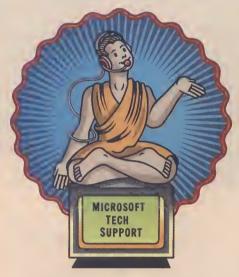
problem unacceptable. Many scribbled angry comments in the margins of the survey form or relayed them to us in phone interviews.

And yet for all that, the respondents handed out generous final grades for software reliability and support. An amazing 74 percent of those polled said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the reliability of the software they purchased in the past year, while 57 percent said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of support for their software.

It seems as if home computer users expect

trouble from software, just as people in the 1950s accepted the wavy, snowy pictures on their TV sets. Should buyers simply accept that it's normal for programs to contain bugs? Consumers don't tolerate poor TV reception, noisy interference on phone calls or PCs limited to 640K of RAM; software customers deserve and should expect higher reliability and better support for their money. Voice your opinions in the Software Support folder in our forum on America Online (Keyword; homepc). We'll be watching companies' progress closely in 1996.

#### on the front lines: a day in the life of a software support team



Microsoft support engineer Erik

Torgerson paces back and forth

around his cubicle, stepping as far
as his headset cord allows. He

rarely stops moving as he fields
calls from baffled customers.

He spends 13 minutes giving step-by-step instructions on how to install the Automap program—click here, then click on this icon, then click there, says Erik, never bothering to glance at the three computers on his desk. He knows

this program—and the 33 others he supports—as well as the road he travels daily between work and home, and can communicate his expertise in simple terms with PC users who call for help.

As befits the world's largest software company, Microsoft operates the biggest software-support organization. Its 4,000 in-house and contract technicians handle more than 43,000 calls a day. The operation costs the company \$600 million a year, even after deducting the fees it obtains charging some customers for phone support.

"We try to get a caller to an engineer in no more than two minutes and resolve the problem on the first call, which we do about 95 percent of the time for our home products," says Deborah Willingham, vice president of support. She acknowledges that some callers waited more than an hour for help in the first weeks after Windows 95 debuted on August 24, but when we checked in early September, no caller waited longer than six minutes.

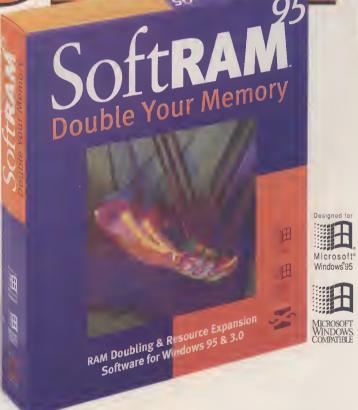
The vast majority of the company's support staff look like scruffy college students. They seem to relish hunting for bugs and rescuing crashed computers, even if frustrated callers yell at them from time to time.

David Moller, who takes calls on the Windows 95 support line between 3 p.m. and 2 a.m., typically spends about 30 minutes with each caller, though sometimes a solution can take more than an hour. He's patient and doesn't rush customers off the phone; Microsoft judges the performance of its support staff on customer satisfaction rather than the number of calls handled in a day.

Occasionally, David gets stumped. If the customer has called on the 900 line, where help costs \$1.95 a minute, David puts him or her on hold while he looks up information or yells over his partition for a colleague's help; customers don't pay for time on hold. When David can't solve a problem, he promises a more experienced engineer will investigate and call the customer within four days.

Once in a while, a technician receives a call that's amusing enough to share with the rest of the staff. There was the woman who kept stepping on her mouse, thinking it was a foot pedal, and the guy who stuffed two disks into his floppy drive because the installation told him to insert disk two but never said to remove disk one first. It's all in a day's—or night's—work.—J.E.

# double click. double memory.

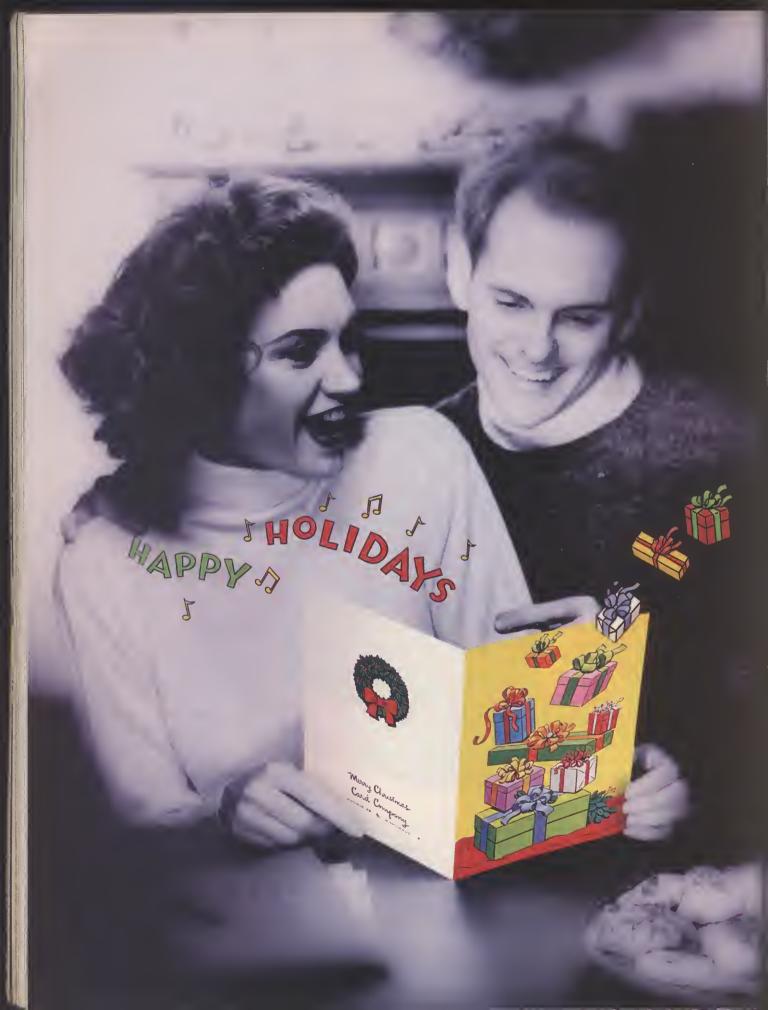


■ Doubling RAM doesn't have to be hard. Install SoftRAM<sup>55</sup> and instantly speed up Windows 95 and Windows 3.0 and higher. Run multimedia and RAM hungry applications. Open more applications simultaneously. Say good-bye to "Out-of-Memory" messages. 4MB becomes at least 8MB. 8MB becomes at least 16MB. Get the idea? (In fact, you can get up to 5 times more memory.) SoftRAM<sup>55</sup> works with all 386 and higher desktops and laptops. *PC Novice* calls SoftRAM the "real RAM doubler for Windows." Executive Summary: Don't Run Windows Without It." syncronys

SoftRAM<sup>95</sup> is now at resellers everywhere or direct from 1-800-691-7981.

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Software





## multimedia reetings



Shortly after Thanksgiving, a trickle of greeting cards tucked between the bills and catalogs in the mailbox grows into a steady stream of daily surprises. We catch sight of a colorful envelope in the stack and can't wait to see whom it's from, how the card inside looks and what the greeting says. Some cards are breathtakingly beautiful. A few bring

Animation software lets you send best wishes in mini-movies. Here's the scoop on four programs that push the envelope, with ideas for making a 'moving' card yourself.

BY CAROLYN JABS

coveted letters from friends or family far away. Others betray almost no emotion at all—best wishes ring hollow over prefab signatures.

To give friends and family a special treat this holiday season, use your home computer to send original greetings unlike any they've seen. Using animation software, you can create multimedia cards that come alive on the recipients' computers. These programs let you add music and sound effects to your text and graphics. More impressive, they make your card *more*. For example, you can have your greeting drop on screen letter by letter, or float entire words into position. You can make a bird fly or a train chug simply by dragging a pre-animated item into place and putting it into motion. A

#### MULTIMEDIA GREETINGS

HAPPY DE LOALS

series of scenes in your greeting, played in sequence, can look just like a movie.

Some animation programs are tricky to master, but I found several that will put dabblers perfectly at ease. Each includes drawing tools, background options, graphics, animated actors, sound effects and music.

Every program has you start by building a scene, or page, which can be as simple as a colorful background or as elaborate as a scanned photo portrait. Then you add the action, which may be as basic as a drawing that appears line

by line, or as ambitions as a choreographed troupe of animated actors doing a holiday dance. You can add sound effects, and experiment with visual tricks such as wipes and dis-

three seenes, using materials readily available in your program's library.

#### Studio M

Far and away, the easiest program I saw to animate a greeting card is Studio M, which includes not only basic animation tools, but

#### On your first try, the trick is to keep it simple.

Limit your card to two or

three scenes.



also a series of predesigned templates similar to those in the popular Print Shop Deluxe and Print Artist programs. The templates inelude a premade short animated greeting

with "placeholders"—to personalize the animation, simply drop your message, graphies and photos (if you have a scanner) into place. Basic instructions for customizing the card are found in easy-to-follow word balloons. You can further modify the template by adding text, or dropping in animations, music or sound effects that are stored in the Studio M libraries.

Of the 50 templates in Studio M, six are suitable for Christmas greetings. Although the program promises choices ranging from silly to serious, the kind of offbeat

hmmor found in studio cards dominates the selection. One card features "The Twelve Daves of Christmas"—scan in your own photo to become any or all of the 12 Daves, including a cop and a Deadhead. The card is easily adaptable for women named Kay or



Instructions in Studio M pop up in easy-to-read word balloons.

solves. Finally, you decide how long each scene will be and how many you'll string together for your presentation.

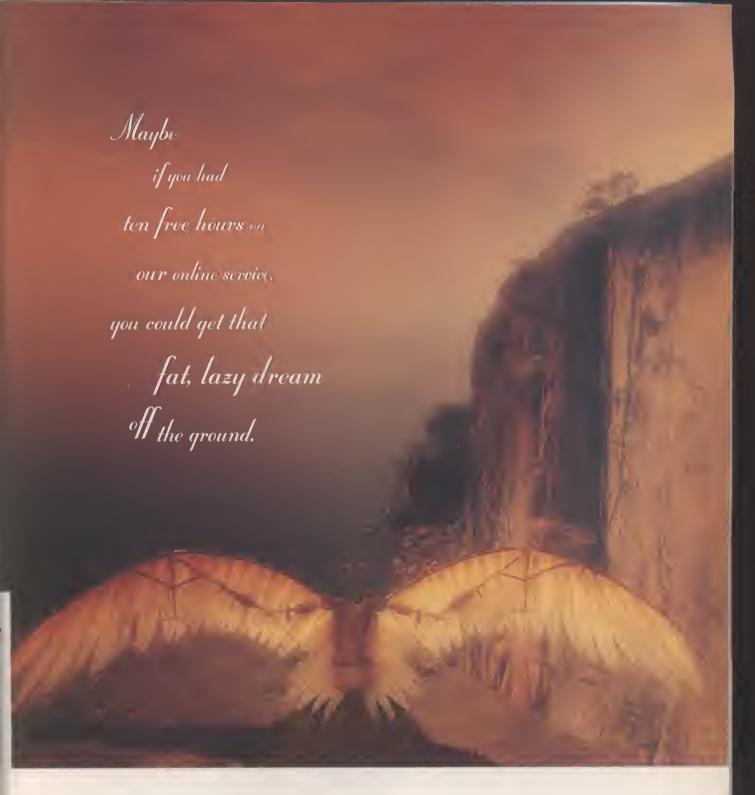
For your first stab at multimedia eardmaking, the trick is to keep it simple. You should try to convey your message in two or







Studio M's templates favor the kind of offbeat humor found in studio cards. "Seasoning's Greetings" (above) fits on a single disk, and the recipient doesn't need Studio M to run it.



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#### MULTIMEDIA GREETINGS

"APPY" HOLIDAY

families named Ray—you get the idea. Another card that can fit any winter holiday begins with a multimedia fanfare and dissolves to a hearth with an animated fire. The punch line: "With multimedia like this, who needs TV?" A template that contains an invitation to a New Year's party could be converted into a card easily. My personal favorite is one



If Studio M's templates don't cheer you, you can design a card from scratch using clip art.

that shows a rack of singing spice jars with the message "Seasoning's Greetings."

When you save your greeting, you have the option to "Save As Self-Running" on a high-density (1.44-MB formatted) disk. Essentially, this creates a program that runs itself and "plays" the animation, so the card's recipient won't need a copy of Studio M to "read" it. Most of the templates are designed to fit on a single disk; if your production takes up more space, on-screen instructions will tell you how to save it to a second disk. Your greeting can be played back by anyone who has a minimum 386 PC with 4

megabytes (MB) of RAM, Windows 3.1, a 256-color driver for the graphics card and a Windows-compatible sound card. The program comes with nine convenient playback-instruction labels; affix one to the disk before you mail it.

Studio M also lets you send your greeting by electronic mail. The manual includes detailed instructions for sending your multimedia greeting over various on-line services or the Internet; for the most part, it's as simple as attaching the file to an e-mail message. The recipient can play the card just by downloading the file and double-clicking on its name or icon in Windows.

If the templates in Studio M don't tickle you, choose No Template and start from scratch, drawing on the program's ample libraries of clip art, sound effects, music and animated graphics. You can also scan in your own art or family photos, record your own audio with a microphone if you have a sound card (you can buy a mike for as little as \$20), and even insert stills or segments from home videos if you have a video-capture card.

One easy way to create a card from scratch is to make a gradient background by mixing green and white. Then use the Text Option to type Merry Christmas. Choose an appealing font and make the letters red. Next, select Modify Object and click on Transitions. To the left of the screen, you'll see a list of ways to present type on the page; for example, Slider makes the letters appear to slip out of a slot in the middle of the page, and Random Pixels reveals your words on the screen a few dots at a time.

Once you choose an effect, select Modify Page, then Duration, to indicate how long you want the words to linger on the screen. Next, create a second page with Merry Christmas written in a different language, and choose a different font and transition. Make as many of these pages as you like. Set them to music, such as the Holiday 3 selection you'll find by choosing Sound, then Disk. If you have a microphone, try recording your kids singing the first line of a Christmas carol in the different languages. On the final page, add the greeting, "No matter how you say it...Have a Wonderful Christmas."

#### **Director's Lab**

Studio M is meant for grown-ups. It has a comprehensive help menu that will feel familiar to any Windows user. Its sound effects



and artwork are polished and, frankly, a little predictable. If your household includes an adolescent, or an adult with a slightly skewed imagination—and the eard's recipient also has a taste for offbeat humor—you may prefer Nickelodeon's Director's Lab, a surprisingly sophisticated animation tool for people who revel in Gak—and even some of us who

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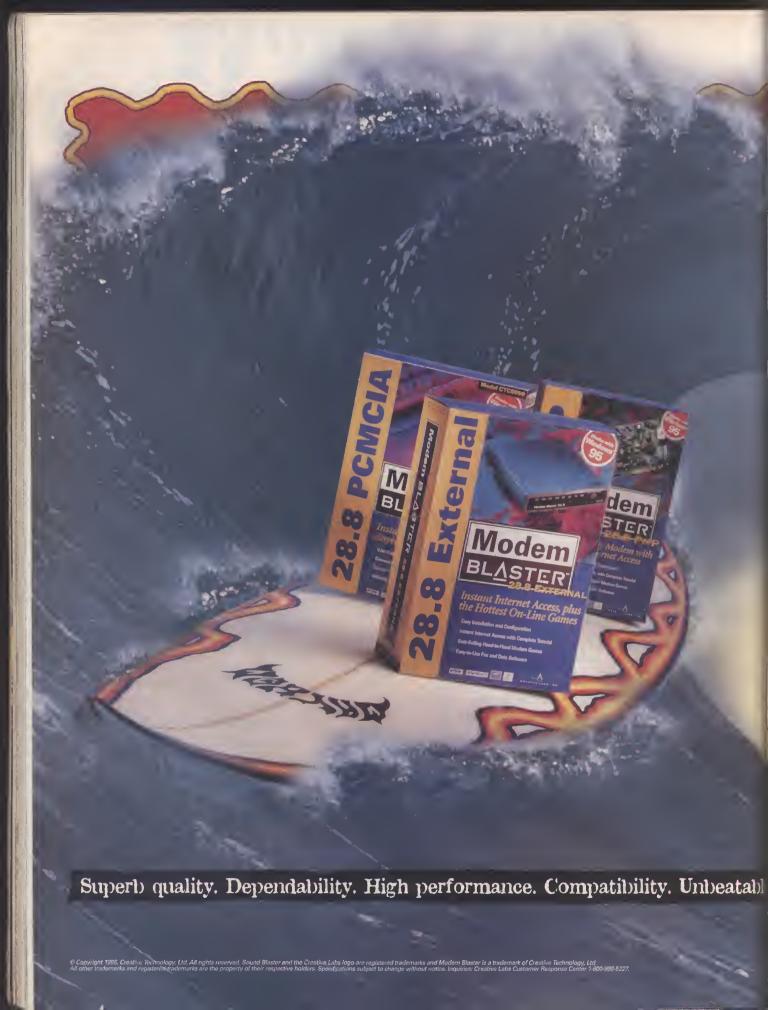
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oftware value. That's what made Sound Blaster #1.







aren't familiar with that gooey concoction, but have a silly streak.

If you're not a Gak fan, some of the things that make Director's Lab attractive to kids may annoy you. For example, the help screens feature a young Nickelodeon star nodding toward the various features around her and ex-

plaining what they do.

Whether you like its style or not, you can't help but be impressed by the number of choices in Director's Lab's five libraries, which are crammed with unusual stamps (images). titles, video clips, music and sound effects. Each library contains 10 categories, including Animals, Vehicles, Sports and Stuff 1 Made. You'll find wilder items, such as a video of a Geyser of Gak and the sound of Wet Lips, in the categories labeled Nick Universe and Junk Drawer.

The Holidays and Events category has several items perfect for Hanukkah and

Christmas, Director's Lab doesn't have templates, but it provides sample videos of unconventional holiday greetings to inspire you. The elements are tailor-made for a card that's shocking, satirical or downright goofy.

To start, either alone or with your child, try creating a card based on the classic poem "The Night Before Christmas." Make a title page in the Title Editor room. Then go to the Video Suite; in the Video library choose Holidays and Events, where you'll find a short clip called Holiday Zoom (a camera shot that

enough time to recite, "Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house...' Now bring the title page, video, and text or narration into the Director's Lab. where

you'll see six timelines; they'll look like filmstrips when you select them. Click on the Titles strip and drop your title into the first frame. (Add a blank screen to the second



Nickelodeon's Director's Lab will help you make terrific holiday cards, albeit with a decidedly irreverent approach to the season.

frame, or the title will stay in the background throughout the video.) Click on the Video strip and start your zoom video in the second frame. Finally, click on Sound FX and insert your voice into the frames that contain the zoom video.

Now head for the Graphics Studio and pull out graphics of sedentary animals such as the ecl face, the fuzzbird or the porcupine. Record a soundtrack of yourself saying, "Not a creature was stirring except for..." In the final frames, record "The blob!!!" in your most horrified-sounding voice, and follow it with the Scream from the Nick Universe category in the Sound FX library.

Create a graphic for this section in the Graphics Studio. Go to the Graphics library, and in the Holidays and Events category choose Xmas Stuff-a picture of Santa with Christmas ornaments. Then cover the picture with a small green circle that gets bigger in each of three frames until it engulfs Santa. In the final frame, add something like, "Have a frighteningly good holiday!"—and don't forget to add your name, so your recipient knows just who's responsible.

This production, which was inspired by my own 11-year-old son Bert's first effort at animation, probably won't win points for good taste, but it's fun to put together and a blast to watch. The main problem with Director's Lab is that it runs best in DOS, where memo-

#### **Director's Lab's three-second audio** limit is long enough to record a cute phrase to go with the visual.



panel to run it backward, so the viewer feels as if he or she is going into the house. Although you can add text from the Title Editor room to your video, it's more fun to record your own narration (the program docsn't include a microphone, however). The

moves from a hearth to a snowy scene out-

side the house). Click on the clip to select it,

then hit the Reverse button on the control

Sound FX Studio limits you to a three-second sound bite, but as it happens, that's just



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CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 27

#### MULTIMEDIA GREETINGS



ry is in short supply; the program needs at least 540 kilobytes (KB) of conventional memory and 2 MB of expanded memory. In addition, you can't resize art, so you have to use the stamps and animated clips as they are, and it can be difficult to edit the timeline.

On the plus side, the program includes a Video To Go option that makes it easy to



In Director's Lab's Video Suite, you edit your work frame by frame into 'filmstrips' (at top).

send a copy of your card to friends and family. Be sure to turn this option on *before* creating your greeting by going to the Screening Room and flipping the switch in the upper left corner. This ensures that when you pull together your video, the program will auto-

should find your greeting card stored in Stuff I Made. Click the green Save button. It will prompt you to insert the first of two floppy disks; you'll get the best results if you use blank, preformatted disks. The second disk will hold the card; the first will include the drivers needed to make your video play on any 386 or faster PC with 540 KB of conventional memory, 2 MB of expanded memory, DOS 4.0 or later, a Sound Blaster-compatible sound card and a 256-color video driver.

#### **Magic Theatre**

Magic Theatre doesn't have a timeline or elaborate studios, yet its simplified format may make it the perfect program for younger children and for adults who'd rather not spend the whole holiday season fiddling with special effects. My 7-year-old daughter, Jessie, was able to make her own movie within minutes of sitting down with the program. But make no mistake: Magic Theatre is easy, not simplistic. Each time the program opens, you're treated to a short feature that gives you lots of intriguing examples of what you can do with the program. (If you





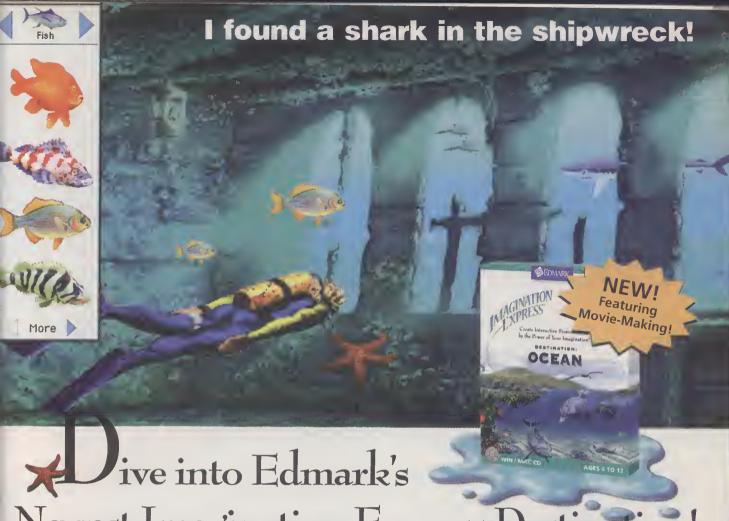


Magic Theatre's easy-to-use format makes it a good choice for kids, or for adults with little time to learn the ropes. You'll find lots of library images, and you can record audio to go with them.

matically limit its length to fit on one disk, or about 12 frames, depending on how many video clips you use. Keep an eye on the empty/full bar in the lower left as you work; it'll show how much room you have left.

When you finish your greeting, return to the Screening Room and click on Get. You want to skip this demonstration, you can cut it off by clicking on the Stop button.)

You'll get the best results with Magic Theatre if you think like a child. Jessie, for example, got tremendous pleasure from drawing with the marker tools—each has a sound that's incorporated into the animation auto-



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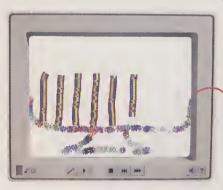


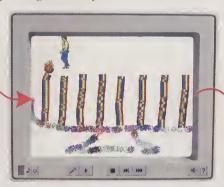
matically—and then watching her picture reappear line by line on the screen. You can use this very basic technique to good effect in making holiday cards. For example, to make a Hanukkah greeting, use the dotted-rainbow spray can to draw a simple menorah—basically a saucer on a stand. The music for this tool has a charming, magical sound. Next, use the bright-rainbow spray can to draw eight lines, or candles; each candle springs to life with a wonderful sweep on a harp.

Next, choose an animated figure from the Animation library designated by the Fish

and click on the Pause button. Use the widest white marker to make the man disappear. Repeat the process with seven other animated figures until all the caudles are hit. Then add a final scene with a text greeting such as, "We hope your Hanukkah is filled with unexpected joys!"

A similar approach can make a jolly Christmas card. Start with the outline of a fir tree drawn with the green marker. Fill your shape with green. Then have animated figures march up to the tree and "hang" ornaments chosen from the Magic Brushes section. Or, do







To make this menorah scene in Magic Theatre, Carolyu drew the basic shape, and by dragging the mouse, she had the walking man and other Animation library characters light the candles.

icon. I began with the walking man, but you can use anything from the swimming turtle to the little girl jumping rope. By holding down the mouse button and dragging your character across the page, you'll create animated movement. Stop the character when it reaches the farthest candle and release the mouse button. Open the Magic Brushes library (designated by the wand) and select the flame. Click once to position a flame over the first candle. Now save the scene. Play the movie until you come to this point

your own version of "The Twelve Days of Christmas." Magic Theatre doesn't have stamps for partridges and milkmaids, but you could have, say, six spacemen landing and four dinosaurs roaring.

The microphone included with Magic Theatre makes it easy to record voice messages to accompany your animations. For instance, your child could recite: "On the first night of Hanukkah, father lit the candle," and so on. Or the entire family could sing "O Christmas Tree" as your animated tree is

being decorated. Just remember that narration adds substantially to the storage space needed by your animation. A narrated production requires approximately 600 KB of storage per minute; without narration, movies need 5 KB of storage per scene.

Although Magic Theatre is likely to provide years of creative fun for younger kids, it will eventually frustrate more ambitious animators. Among other things, you can't change the size of the existing stamps and animations. Overall, its editing capabilities are extremely limited.

Magic Theatre also requires

#### **Get a multimedia card on AOL**

We've created an animated holiday card just for you. You'll find it on America Online in the DOS/Windows section of *HomePC*'s software library (Keyword: homepc), in the Holiday Cards folder. And there are



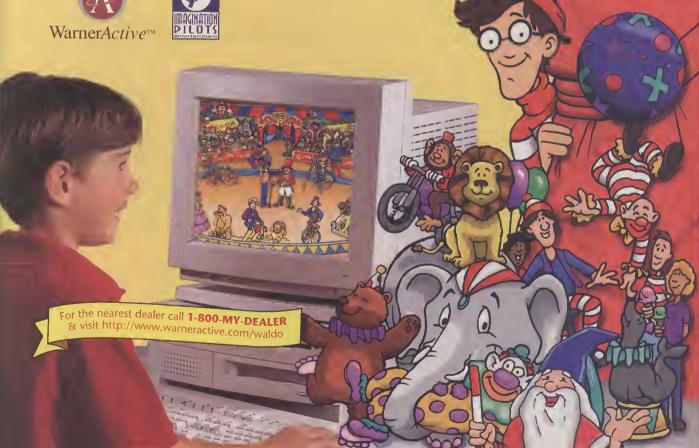
fireworks galore in a New Year's card that you can download for someone special. Both cards were made using Studio M; each takes 10 minutes to download and send by e-mail.

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some ingenuity if you want to share an animated greeting with friends. Each movie you make is saved automatically to your hard drive; if you want to copy it to a floppy disk in Windows 3.1, you must open File Manager and look in *C:\mtheatre\movies* (assuming you installed the program on your C: drive); in the Windows 95 Explorer, look for the Mtheatre folder, and within



Amazing Animation for the Mac includes a storyboard showing each scene, for easy edits.

that, the Movies folder. Magic Theatre assigns each movie a number. Your most recent production will have the highest number; find all files with that number and copy them to your floppy.

To play Magic Theatre files, the program must first be installed on the recipient's PC. Fortunately, the relatively low cost of this program makes it a reasonable gift to send along with your greeting. When you mail your "card," tell the recipient to load Magic Theatre and then download the contents of the floppy disk into the Movie file in the program—the path is C:\mitheatre\movies. Then, not only can the recipient watch your animated greeting, but he or she can make one to send you in return.

#### **Amazing Animation**

Amazing Animation, available only for the Macintosh, has all the ease of Magic Theatre, more sophisticated capabilities, and few, if any, of that program's limitations. Among other things, Amazing Animation includes a storyboard—a series of screens showing each scene you've created, so you can go back to edit or reorder scenes. You can also resize stamps, fix mistakes and save movies in a

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number of formats (Scrapbook, Pics and QuickTime) so they can be viewed on other computers, including PCs running Windows.

With each of these programs, your multimedia greeting cards are limited only by your imagination and time-and a disk's storage capacity. Although the programs greatly simplify the labor-intensive art of animation, it's still going to take time to locate and coordinate the sounds and pictures you want. Also, as anyone who's ever made a flip book knows, the illusion of animated movement is created by looking quickly through many pictures in which tiny changes have been made. Storing all those pictures takes lots of space, a fact you'll need to remember if you're hoping to cram your final creation outo a single floppy disk. Despite these caveats, animated greeting cards are a wonderful way to use a PC to capture the magic of the season—both for the people who get to make them and for those who get to watch them.

Carolyn Jabs is a HomePC contributing editor. You can send her your comments on this story—or even your multimedia greetings—by e-mail at carolynhpc@aol.com.

#### shopper's guide

Here's how to get more information on the animation programs mentioned here.

#### **Amazing Animation**

Claris, (\$00) 544-8554, (408) 987-7000 \$39.99 (Macintosh, Macintosh CD-ROM) Circle #535

#### **Director's Lab**

Viacom New Media, (800) 469-2539, (212) 258-6000 \$59.99 (DOS CD-ROM) Circle #536

#### **Magic Theatre**

Knowledge Adventure, (\$00) 542-4240, (\$18) 542-4200 \$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM) Circle #537

#### Studio M

Gold Disk, (800) 982-9888, (408) 982-0200 \$49.95 (Windows CD-ROM) Circle #538

**Note:** Before you buy any software, check your computer owner's manual to determine operating system, microprocessor, memory and disk space. Then read the software box or consult a salesperson to be sure the program and your computer are compatible. All prices are suggested or estimated retail.

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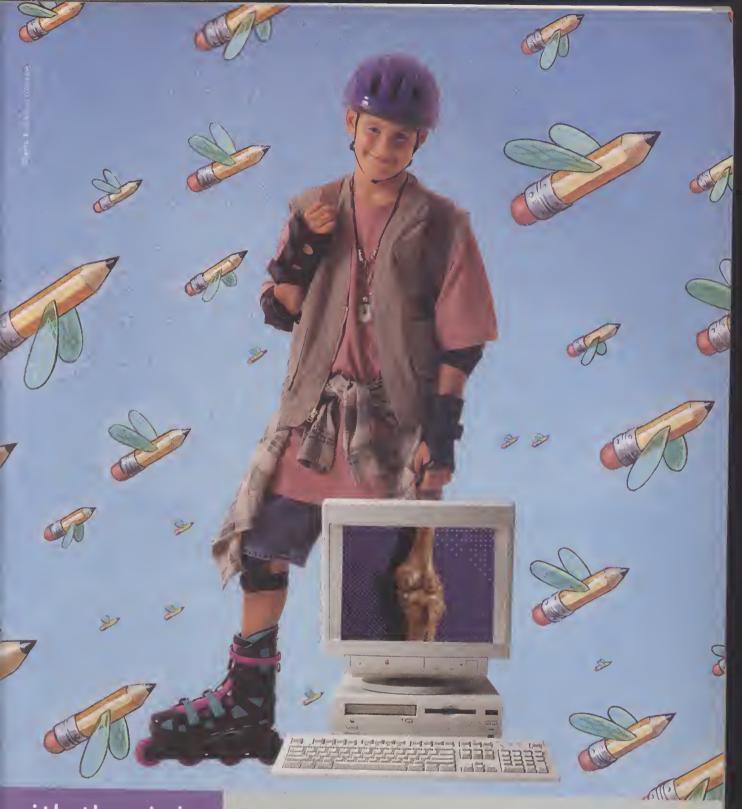
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#### The Explorer

### FILES



Discover how File Manager's successor
can ensure your data never
again becomes uncharted territory.

True to its name, Windows 95
Explorer—one of the operating system's new file-management tools—helps you discover more efficient ways to connect with your PC programs and data.

If you've ever used Windows 3.1's File Manager, Explorer will look familiar; the way you view and work with your PC files will be similar as well. Like File Manager, Explorer shows you how files fit into the big picture. It uses an organizational tree to depict relationships among individual files, groups of files (known as folders or directories) and the drives on which they reside (hard disk, floppy and CD-ROM). Explor-

er's clear overview of the files in your system provides its main edge over My Computer, Windows 95's other new filemanagement tool. However, computer users who are just getting their feet wet at the PC or who cut their teeth on the Macintosh may find My Computer's icon-based approach easier to use. To start My Computer, double-click on its

icon in Windows 95's main screen.

If you'd rather stick to File Manager, Windows 95 lets you have your way, although you have to dig a bit to find it: Go into Explorer and click on the Windows folder on the left side of the screen, then double-click on the Winfile

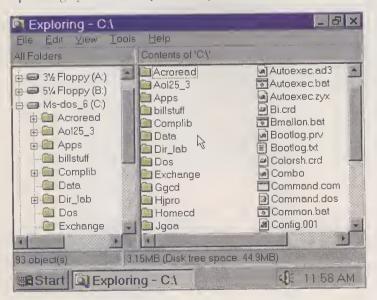
file-cabinet icon on the right.

Be aware, however, that if you use File Manager, you'll miss out on some handy features exclusive to Explorer—including new search options, and a toolbar that lets you carry out common file-management commands quickly by clicking on various icons. Whether you're new to Windows or upgrading from an older version, it pays to explore Explorer. The first tips below will help a novice get rolling; they're followed by hints for intermediate and advanced users who want to take a deeper look at the productivity gains Explorer makes possible.

#### beginners' tips

#### Explore your folders and files.

Click on Windows 95's Start button; when the menu pops up, highlight Programs—no clicking necessary—to bring up another menu. Drag your cursor to the bottom of the second menu and click on Windows Explorer. The operating system takes you to Explorer's main



window, which displays all of your computer's drives—hard disk, floppy, CD-ROM and/or whatever is appropriate for your particular setup—as named icons. Folders are indented under the drive on which they reside.

#### Open your folders.

The Explorer window is divided into two parts, or "panes": Think of the left side as the aerial perspective, while the right shows a close-up. When you click on a folder on the left side of the Explorer window, the files within that folder will be listed on the right. If a folder on the left has a plus sign next to it, that means it holds additional, or "nested," folders. Click on the plus sign to expand that folder, so you can see what folders are sitting inside it; click on the minus sign to collapse the folder.

#### Have it your way—create and name your folders.

Folders help you organize all the data and programs stored within your PC. To create a folder, you must first decide where you want to store it—either on a drive or within another folder. Then, go to the left side of the Explorer window and click on the drive or folder you want. Next, go to the File menu and choose New, which will bring up another menu; drag your cursor to that menu and click on Folder. A new folder will appear in both the left and right panes of the Explorer window; on the right side, its label will be highlighted, allowing you to type in a name. When you've named the new folder, press Enter. (If you change your mind and want to rename a folder or file, just click on the icon for its drive or folder, then on the folder or file name; type in the new name and press Enter.)

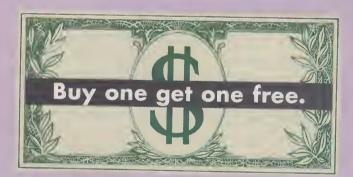
#### Get fancy with file names.

One of Windows 95's best new features is its ability to give your files long names—you're no longer limited to eight characters with a three-character extension as in Windows 3.1. With Windows 95, you can call a file "June Bake-off Results" instead of something more cryptic like "bake6.doc." Windows 95 can handle file names of up to 255 characters (it doesn't matter whether you use upper- or lowercase letters). You can also use characters that are off-limits in Windows 3.1, including blank spaces, plus signs, commas and square brackets. But to see each longer file name in its entirety, you

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may have to resize your window or scroll the window's contents to the right.

Be careful—long file names sometimes cause confusion.

You can use long file names only when you're working with files in Windows 95 or using programs designed for the new operating system. This poses some problems if you're still running Windows 3.1 software or sharing files with someone who's still using the older operating system. If your Windows 95 file name exceeds Windows 3.1's eight-letter maximum or includes symbols the older system doesn't reeognize, your file will be assigned an "alias" made up of the first six letters, a tilde (~), a number and an extension indicating the file type. For example, Windows 3.1 turns my Windows 95 file called "New story ideas, Dec. 95"

into New\_st~1.doc. That alias becomes the "official" name—even when I view the file in Windows 95—if I share the file with anyone who uses the DOS or Windows 3.1 Copy or Backup command on the file while they're working with it. Worse, if I copy New\_st~1.doc to a folder that includes another file with that name, the file's name will be changed to New\_st~2.doc automatically and I won't know a thing about it. Until most programs and people have adopted Windows 95 as their operating system, when you use long file names in Windows 95, consider how they might be abbreviated under Windows 3.1.

6 Drag-and-drop to organize files.

The easiest way to move existing files and folders into new folders is to drag them over using your primary mouse button (for righties, that's usually the one on the left). You can drag one

#### Exploring WINDOWS 95 BOOKS AND OTHER GUIDES

Windows 95 may indeed be simpler to learn and easier to use than Windows 3.1, but no one's an instant expert. If you need some pointers, consider one of the books or interactive tutorials listed below, which stand out in the flurry of new guides that aim to shed light on Windows 95's features.

Windows 95: The Visual Learning Guide by Grace Joely Beatty and David C. Gardner (\$19.95 from Prima Publishing, 800-632-8676, 916-632-4400). Rather than overwhelm their readers with endless, uninviting pages of text, the authors

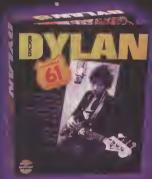
pepper their guide with big, colorful screen images, punchy explanations and helpful arrows pointing to the relevant icons, menus and commands.

Windows 95 in a Day by Jeff Weber (\$19.95 from Weber Systems, 216-591-9449). More sedate-looking than *The Visual Learning Guide*, this volume offers 10 lessons that take you from startup to more advanced subjects, such as sharing information between programs.

Each lesson includes exercises and a quiz.

If you're ready for greater challenges, try Windows 95 Made Easy: The Basics and Beyond by Tom Sheldon (\$27.95 from McGraw-Hill, 800-722-4726, 212-512-2000). This 700-page behemoth tackles subjects such as faxing and the Internet. It may be slow going for beginners, though, because it has lots of text and fewer pictures than the two books above.

If demonstrations help you learn, check out one or more of ViaGrafix's six tutorials in the *Windows 95* series (\$49.95 each for videocassette or CD-ROM; \$219.95 for the set of six, from ViaGrafix, 800-842-4723, 918-825-6700). The discs run under Windows 3.1 or Windows 95; both versions include interactive lessons. The videocassettes are packaged with a floppy disk that contains PC tutorials. -P.R.



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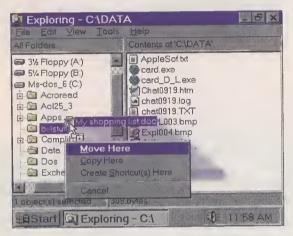






file or folder at a time—moving a folder takes along every other folder or file that's in it—or several folders that you group together. To select items that are listed consecutively, elick on the first item, hold down the Shift key, then click on the last item. Those two files or folders will act as bookends; they and everything listed between them will be highlighted. To select items scattered around the list, hold down the Ctrl key and click on each item you want. Then, to move the highlighted items, place your cursor on one of the selected items, hold down the mouse button and drag it to the new folder-all the other highlighted items will tag along; release the mouse button only after the destination folder is highlighted.

#### 7 Try two ways to copy files.



If you want to copy one or more files from one folder to another, first select the items as described in the previous tip, then place your cursor on a selected item. While holding down the primary mouse button and the Ctrl key, drag the item to the new folder. You can also copy files using your secondary mouse button (for righties, that's generally on the right). Select the items and hold down the secondary mouse button as you drag them; this is called right-dragging. When your cursor is on the destination folder, release the button. A menu will pop up that lets you choose Move Here or Copy Here.

If you're copying files from disk to disk—say, from your hard drive to a floppy—there's no need to right-drag. Windows 95 considers any dragging between disks as a command to Copy, rather than Move.

#### Create a folder to store commonly used files.

Say you produce a monthly newsletter that contains a logo and masthead you use in every issue. To save time locating and accessing files you use regularly, store them in a "common" folder. First, create a new folder. Then select the files you expect to use frequently. Right-drag them to the new folder and choose Copy Here.

#### Use your toolbar to issue common commands quickly.

Choosing options from a menu is a great way to see all possible commands at a glance, but it's not as quick as a single click. If you're carrying out a common file-management command, aim your mouse at the toolbar—the line of icons near the top of the Explorer window. (If you don't see it, click on View, then on Toolbar.) Highlight the file you want, then click on the appropriate icon to tell Explorer what you'd like to do with it. You can use icons for operations such as Cut (the scissors), Copy (the two overlapping pages), Paste (the clipboard with the little page), Delete (the X) and Undo (the curved arrow pointing backward).

#### Recycle your unused files and folders.

When you no longer need a file or folder, select it and drag it to the Recycle Bin on the main Windows 95 screen. Items in the Recycle Bin sit on your hard disk until the Bin either runs out of room or you tell the system to empty it (double-click on the Bin, go to the File menu and click on Empty Recycle Bin). If you want to retrieve a file, double-click on the Bin icon to see



what's in it. If the file you're looking for is there, simply drag it out of the Bin and take it back to a folder or disk.

#### Dispose of the real trash.

If you're certain you no longer need a file or folder, select the item and choose Delete from

## Introducing the new shape of advanced surge protection: SurgeArrest by APC

he simple truth may be disturbing: most PC's already have more surge protection built into them than that provided by most so-called "surge protectors." In other words, buying no protection at all is as good as under spending on one of the most important PC decisions you can make. Worse yet, the only way you'll find out your "protection" is (or was) inadequate is the hard way: the school of high shocks.

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SurgeArrest is so advanced, its SafeShield design holds its own patent (#342,055). The smooth curves isolates your equipment from power problems, then pick them off one by one (see below). This multistage protection is far superior than single technology "surge suppressors." Moreover, a SurgeArrest is available for any application, including phone lines and cable TV, and performance is even backed by up to a \$25,000 repair/replacement guarantee on any properly protected equipment. Unlike competitive policies packed with fine print which disclaims their warranty for lightning strikes (just when you need it most!), SurgeArrest even provides protection against direct lightning strikes, so you can rest easy even in the worst storm.

Lab tests prove SurgeArrest's superiority, which eliminates a 6000 Volt surge (tot) while Brand T lets through high levels to equipment (bottom).



But SurgeArrest goes beyond the performance you want to the safety you need. SurgeArrest's SafeShield design incorporates a fail-safe thermal fuse to reduce the danger of surge-induced fires, a site-wiring fault indicator to automatically diagnose dangerous wiring conditions, and Catastrophic Event Protection, to ensure that your delicate equipment is protected at all costs, even by sacrificing the unit. And since a "Protection Working" indicator is standard, you never have to wonder if SurgeArrest is prepared to take a hit. If the indicator goes out, simply call APC for a new SurgeArrest at no cost to you.

#### RECOMMENDED BY THE EXPERTS...

APC has won more awards for performance and reliability than all other power protection vendors combined. Not surprisingly, when PCWorld recently went shopping for the ideal surge suppressor for the home office, they came up with SurgeArrest. So protect yourself before you kick yourself. Ask for APC SurgeArrest with the SafeShield design wherever quality computer products are sold.

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"SurgeArrest's indicators diagnosed a wiring fault in a building we just moved to. The landlord fixed the problem, but if we had used a cheap unit instead of SurgeArrest we would have had to pay. SurgeArrest has saved us time, money, and equipment problems... Rick Thompson, Networx







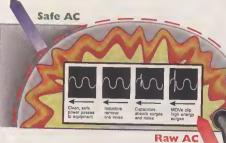
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the File menu or press the Shift and Delete keys simultaneously. Permanent deletion is a very good idea for large files you're sure you won't need anymore: if you stash those files in your Recycle Bin indefinitely, they'll hog up precious disk space that could be used by files you need.

Quit the finished

#### Quit the Explorer when you're finished with it.

Explorer eats up memory and slows processing time. When you're not using it, close it: Cliek on the "X" in the top right corner of the Explorer window or choose Close from the File menn.

#### intermediate tips

If you can't locate a file, use the Find utility.

Have you misplaced a file? Don't sweat it. Just like Windows 3.1, Explorer has a utility program that lets you search for a file by its name. Click on Tools and highlight Find, which calls np a menu. Highlight and click on the Files Or Folders option. When the Find: All Files window appears, simply type in the name of the file or folder you want (or even part of the name) and where you think it might be—say, on your hard drive or a floppy disk in use. To do a thorough search, make sure the Include Subfolders box is cheeked; if it isn't, click on it. Then click on Find Now.

14 Try two new search tools.

Windows 95 provides new search features that can also locate files by date and by content. To search by date, go to the Find utility's Find: All Files window and click on the Date Modified tab, then specify a time frame. For instance, if you know you worked with the file recently, you could narrow the search (and speed things up) by instructing Explorer to look only for those files that were created or modified in the past two days.

To use Explorer's Find program to search by content, type in a keyword and the system will try to match it to the files it sees on your hard drive and floppies. Click on the Advanced tab, then go to the Containing Text area and type in a keyword or phrase you think you used in the file you're seeking: you ean use numbers, too, which comes in handy if you're hunting for spreadsheet or database files. Click on Find Now, and Explorer will list all the files containing that partiemlar phrase or number. You can open any of these files by double-clicking on them. If you

know what type of file or folder you're looking for, you can speed the search. Cliek on the arrow at the end of the Of Type line and choose one of the file types listed.

Save time by opening files instead of programs.

Windows 95, like Windows 3.1, automatically associates a file with the program that was used to create it. This means that in Explorer, you can open a program and file in one easy step. Let's say you've been using your word processor to write a document. The next time you go to work on that document, you don't have to find your word-processing program, double-click on it to get it running, search for the doc-

Clip and save
SHORTCUTS

Keyboard and/or mouse combinations function as shortcuts in Windows 95. To save time issuing the following commands, keep this list handy when you use your PC.

#### General Windows 95 Commands

Command Keyboard/Mouse

Copy Ctrl+C. or Ctrl+Ins

Cut Ctrl+X
Delete Del
Help F1

Paste Ctrl+V. or Shift+Ins

Previous window Alt+Tab
Quit Alt+F4
Start menu Ctrl+Ese
Undo Ctrl+Z

View properties Shift+F10, or Secondary-elick

#### My Computer and Explorer Commands

Close folder and Shift while clicking

all parent folders on Close
Copy file Ctrl+Drag

Create shortcut Ctrl+Shift+Mouse-drag

Delete permanently Shift+Del Find F3

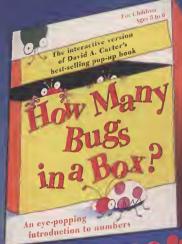
Refresh window F5
Rename F2
Select all Ctrl+A

View folder one level up
View properties

Baekspace
Alt+Enter

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—Electronic Entertainment ALISTAIR AND THE ALIEN INVASION Ages 5 to 10 Windows/Mac



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ument you need and then click on the name. Instead, locate the document in Explorer, then simply double-click on the file to launch your word processor and open the document simultaneously. The program and file always remain associated; moving files from one folder or disk to another will not disrupt the link.

#### 16

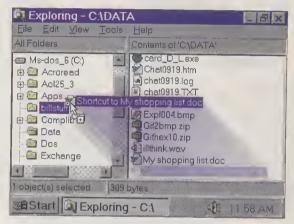
#### Don't make moving files a drag.

If you don't like dragging the mouse, or you want to move or copy files to a folder buried within another folder, try using cut-and-paste instead. Use the secondary mouse button to click on the file you want to move or copy. A menu will pop up giving you a choice to Cut or Copy; highlight your choice, then click on your selection with the primary mouse button. Click on the folder to which you'd like to send the file using the secondary mouse button. When a menu pops up, click on Paste using the primary mouse button. (You can perform the same cut-and-paste action using the Edit menu.) If you choose Send To from the same menu you used to choose Cut or Copy, you can immediately copy a file to a floppy disk, fax it or include it in e-mail.

#### advanced tips

17 Save disk space with shortcuts.

Explorer's shortcuts let you quickly access one file from different folders without duplicating the file (which uses a lot of disk space); each file shortcut takes up only about 1 kilobyte of space. For example, to call up the most recent draft of a story I'm writing from either my To Do folder or my Writing Projects folder, I keep the original document in Writing Projects and create a shortcut for my To Do folder.





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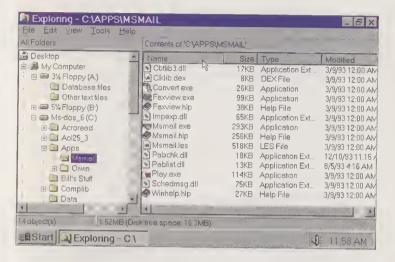


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To set this up, elick on the file, then go to the File menn and select Create Shortcut. A new file named "Shortcut to" followed by the original file name will appear in the file listing for that folder. Now, move the shortcut file anywhere you'd like. When you double-click on the shortcut, it automatically retrieves the file and displays it on your sereen.

18 Look at files in new ways.



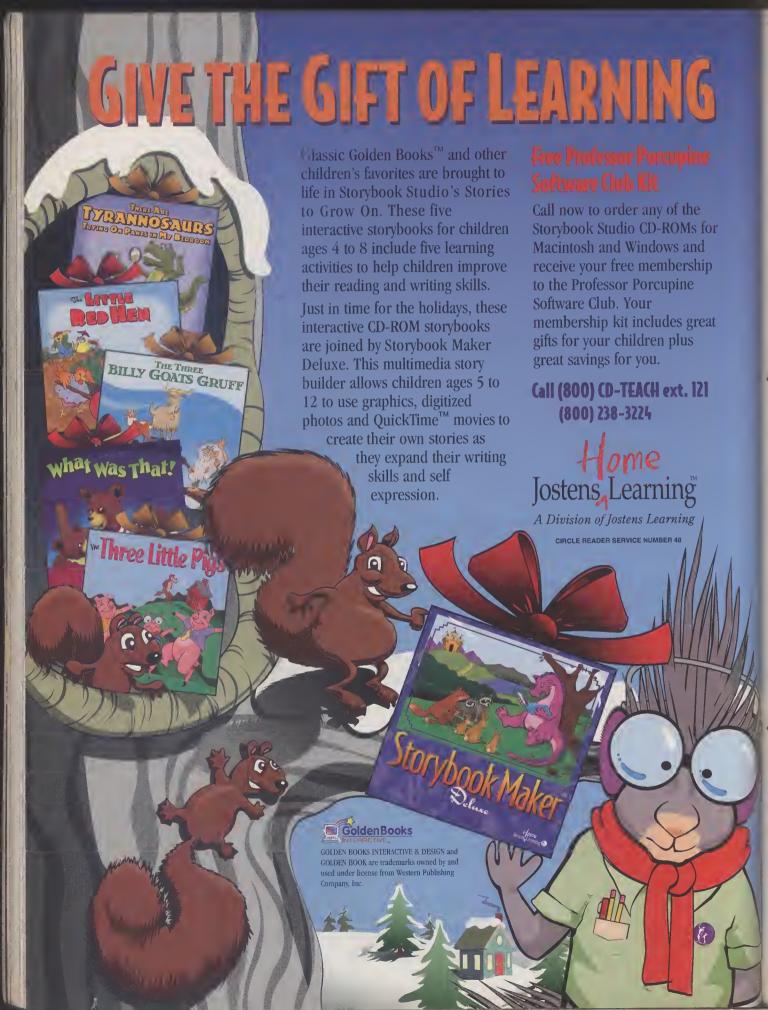
Vou can look at the files on the right side of the Explorer window in several ways. The default setting is List, which fits as many files, as it can in the window. If you want more information, click on the View menn and choose the Details view, which offers brief descriptions of your alphabetized files. Clicking on the Size button in this view lists files by the number of bytes they contain; the Type button sorts by file type, such as application or text document; and Modified sorts by the date and time of the most recent file updates. Clicking on each setting's button shifts the list to show files in either ascending or descending order.

#### 19 Protect files with Properties

Windows 95 lets you define the attributes of a file so it can be read, but not changed. You can also choose to exclude a particular file from your file listings, so that a casual observer won't even know it's there.

Click on the file you want to protect using the secondary mouse button. A menu will pop up; use the primary mouse button to choose Properties. (You can also choose Properties from the File menu.) Click on the Read-only checkbox to safeguard the contents of a file





from changes, or on the Hidden checkbox to exclude the file from your listings. These changes will take effect after you reboot Windows 95 or "refresh" your listings by going to the View menu and choosing Refresh. To see a list of the files you've hidden, go to the View menu and choose Options; when the window pops up, select Show All Files. (Of course, if someone else follows these same steps, your "secret" files will be revealed.)



#### Resize your Recycle Bin.

This isn't strictly an Explorer tip, but it's an important point to remember. Since the files stored in your Recycle Bin take up disk space, you may want to reduce the total amount of space allotted to the Bin.

If your Bin is full, Windows 95 will make space by erasing the files that have been in the Bin the longest. The Recycle Bin's disk-space allotment is preset at 10 percent. But if you don't want 10 percent of your disk space tied up with files you presumably have decided you don't want to see again, you can adjust that percentage. Use the secondary mouse button to click on the Recycle Bin. When the menu pops up, use your primary mouse button to click on

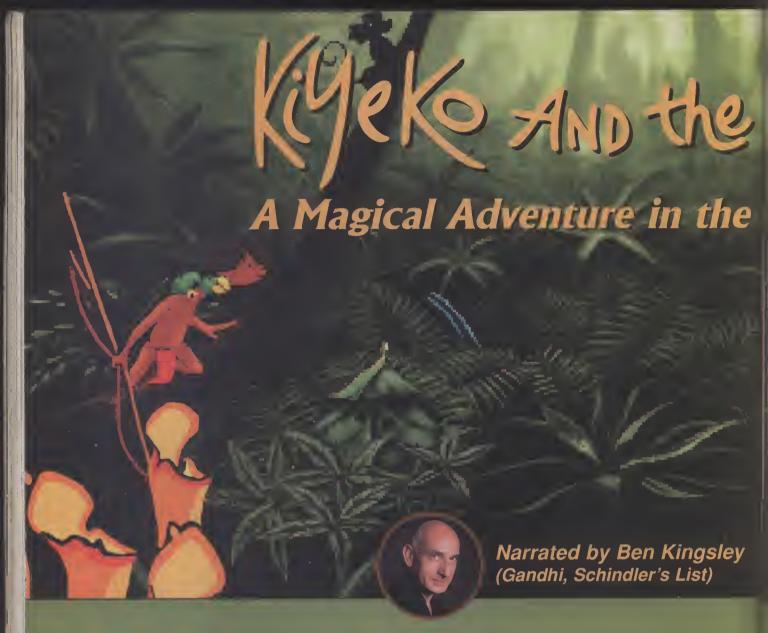
Properties; move the slider to indicate how much of your disk space you want to devote to the Recycle Bin, then elick on OK.
The 5-percent setting suits me (and probably most people) just fine. But 1 percent is



pretty small—unless you're the type who simply never looks back.

Phillip Robinson writes an internationally syndicated newspaper column about technology. His e-mail address is PRRobinson@aol.com.





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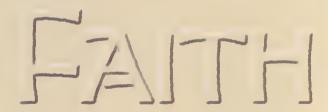
CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 106



## KEEPING THE

One day earlier this year, Carl J. Hahn III, an employee at an aerospace company in Los Angeles, logged onto CompuServe, where he saw the announcement of a live chat with Gerald May. Carl had just read May's

Technology meets theology on the Internet and on-line



book, Addiction and Grace (Harper & Row), which explores the religious aspects of compulsive behavior, and he was eager to ask the author some questions. "I missed the conference," Carl says, "so I went looking for him in the Religion Forum, just in case he was posting messages. There he was. He turned out to be very approachable, and at least as interesting 'live' as he is in his book."



Carl never imagined himself the type to become engrossed in religious discussions over a computer network, but he and May soon became electronic pen pals. During his visits to the forum, Carl met others who shared his blooming interest in spiritual matters. "There's very

#### services, putting a new twist on some age-old spiritual quests. By Jeremy Schlosberg

little room for religious discussion in the professional world I live in," he says. "I just don't know too many people who enjoy theology. Most people either hate discussing it, feel insecure about it, or believe they have to convince you to have the 'right' thoughts."

On-line communication is giving more and more people like Carl an opportunity to thoughtfully discuss spiritual matters with a diverse group of peers. At first, technology and theology might seem an unlikely pairing, but in many ways it's a natural union. The anonymity of cyberspace provides a comfortable setting for people who wish to explore oftencomplex feelings without fear of embarrassment. It allows those who are troubled by their

physical or spiritual separation from their traditional place of worship a way to keep in touch or open a dialogue. Cyberspace also gives the faithful a chance to interact with religious leaders one on one, and to find an array of religious information not easily accessible elsewhere. (For a sampling of religious information on the Internet, see page 232).

Religion tends to be defined broadly in cyberspace, encompassing philosophy, ethics, mysticism, the occult, even politics. You'll came into the forum either to argue that their own beliefs were the only path to God, or to stir up trouble by raising controversial issues," she says. "It got to be rather tedious."

Then one night she found CompuServe's Religious Issues Forum (Go Reliss), with scctions on Ethics, Spiritual Formation, Religious Humor and more. There, Maryanne met people who were open-minded about spirituality and religion. Now she logs on every night. In three instances, she's followed

up chats by arranging to meet face to face with people she's spoken with on-line.

One thing Maryanne appreciates most about the discussions is the diversity of the participants. "I'm free to explore, out loud and with others, what I believe,

without denominational barriers," she says. "It's very liberating to me. I don't feel I have to hide anything I believe, or be ashamed as my beliefs change with time. I've never found that kind of freedom in organized religion before."

At first, the anonymity of cyberspace was a revelation for Maryanne, who had often felt too self-conscious to discuss her thoughts about God and spirituality. But with a nickname to shield her identity, she found no need to worry what the people reading her mes-



## In on-line, discussions, one regular finds, 'I'm free to explore what I believe without barriers.'

find message boards and chat rooms devoted to a wide range of faiths and topics, from agnosticism to Zen. Depending on which forum you enter and when, you can find support or hostility; the nature of exchanges, especially on the Internet, is hard to anticipate. Participants in some discussion groups, such as soc.religion.christian and soc.culture.jewish, thoughtfully debate emotionally charged issues such as abortion and the Middle East peace process. Other groups aren't quite what

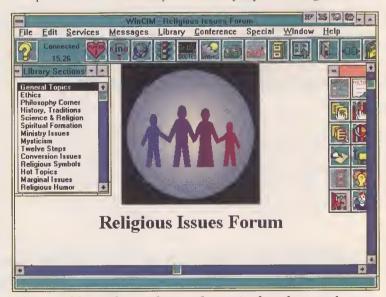
they seem; talk.religion.misc may sound like a promising forum for a meaningful dialogue from a variety of religious perspectives, but when I visited, much of the discussion focused on conspiracy theories about governmental mind-control experiments through water fluoridation.

#### Soul searching

Religious feelings are extremely personal; finding a board or group appropriate to individual needs, interests and temperament may take time. When Maryanne Economos of Athens, Ga., discovered the Christianity section of CompuServe's Religion Forum (Go Religion)

early this year, she thought she'd found what she was looking for. Dissatisfied with the Protestant church in which she was raised, Maryanne was searching for an informal atmosphere in which to discuss and come to terms with her feelings.

"After a while, I noticed that many people



The tone of CompuServe religious chat varies from forum to forum.

sages would think of her; it freed her to express herself honestly and openly. Maryanne says that since religious discussion has entered her daily routine, "I'm much more in tune with God working in my life."

ln addition, the Internet and the commercial on-line services let members of religious

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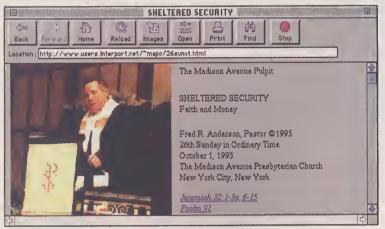
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congregations remain in touch no matter where they roam. When Dedra Goldhoff left her home in Cincinnati in September 1992 to attend Bowling Green State University in Ohio, she also left behind her place of wor-



Various houses of worship are setting up home pages on the Web.

ship. After two years of feeling as if she were "on hiatus" from Judaism, Dedra received an electronic bulletin via the Internet called RockLine—for Rockdale Temple On-line—from Rabbi Dan Rabishaw, the assistant rabbi at the temple she attended at home.

RockLine offered a friendly hello to students from the congregation who had gone away to college, and extended an invitation to ask questions about any and all aspects of Judaism. Word of the service spread locally, and some neighborhood residents asked to receive the electronic bulletins, too. Last De-

members who've moved to the West Coast, families in Israel, local members of his congregation, and, of course, the college students who inspired the project. Dedra enjoys the bulletins so much that she shows them to her non-Jewish friends at Bowling Green. "My only connection with my religion right now is through this digest and my rabbi," she says.

Increasingly, synagogues, churches and other religious organizations are launching home pages on the Internet's World Wide Web. Most provide information on basic spiritual tenets, or describe their approach to religious issues. Many also give schedules of upcoming religions services and special events, and some enable you to send e-mail to their religious leaders.

The Madison Avenuc Presbyterian Church in New York established a Web page last June (http://www.interport.net/~MAPC). "One of the basic tasks of evangelism is to spread the word," says the Rev. Dr. Fred Anderson, senior pastor of the church. "We post our Sunday sermons for members of the congregation who wish to use them for their own devotional purposes, as well as for those who travel and aren't able to attend services."

For people who aren't associated with a particular religious organization or place of worship, cyberspace makes it easier to consult with a spiritual adviser. Leaders of churches, synagogues and other religious organizations are going on-line to offer an ear to anyone who asks for it. Rev. Bill Tenny-Brittian, senior pastor of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Loganville,

Ga., joined America Online in June hoping to find inspiration for his question-and-answer column in a local newspaper, *The Walton Tribune*. He entered the Religion & Ethics Forum (Keyword: religion), went into the Christianity section, then into the Christian

Theology message board. He started a folder there for people to post suggestions, and they've been pouring in steadily ever since.

The Rev. Bill T, as he's known on AOL, soon began dropping in on the other religion message boards, where he meets many people with problems or questions they either can't or won't discuss with their local clergy. "I go on as a mentor," he says, explaining he's particularly keen to reach out to those who say they're not affiliated with a church. "The online world is providing people an opportunity to open up and address their spiritual needs without setting foot in a church," he says.

Father Paul Kcenan, assistant director of



## For one student, a rabbi's e-mail from home is 'my only connection to religion right now.'

cember, Rabbi Rabishaw renamed the service the Rockdale Online Digest and offered it to all comers. "It's my hope," he wrote, "that we can create a forum for questions, Internet exploration, friendly give and take, and good old schmoozing."

The digest contains updates on temple activities, a summary of the week's Torah reading with commentary, and, to encourage electronic debate, topical questions such as "Is political conservatism compatible with Judaism?"

Rabbi Rabishaw now sends the digest to some 150 people, including "snowbirds" who flock to Florida for the winter, former temple

## Columbus died thinking he sailed to Asia.





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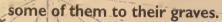
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FAITH

the communications office in the Archdiocesc of New York, believes the accessibility and anonymity of on-line interaction help break down late-20th-century inhibitions about religious dialogue. "I think a lot of people don't know how to begin a conversation on spirituality, much less talk to a priest," he says.

Father Keenan runs a Prodigy chat room called As You Think (Jump: religion) on Tuesdays at noon and 9 p.m., in which he cucourages people to think about their lives in a spiritual way. His chats are loosely organized around a suggested topic or news event, such

as Pope John Paul II's visit to the United States this fall. During one recent discussion, he asked how people felt about their jobs; one individual expressed deep frustration over a prolonged period of unemployment. Father Keenan says he tried to help this man see his situation in the context of his whole life and his continuing spiritual journey.

The nature of live on-line conversation is spontaneous and unpredictable. "A lot of what we talk about depends on who shows up," Father Keenan says. Not long after April's explosion at the Federal Building in

#### Seek and ye shall find: 11 Web sites

If you're seeking spiritual enrichment or want to deepen your insight into the traditions of your faith, you'll find a rich source of material on the Internet's World Wide Web. Here are some sites to start you on your quest.

#### A-Z of Jewish and Israel Related Resources

http://www.ort.org:80/anjy/a-z/ From archaeology in Israel to Zionism, this site provides a comprehensive source of easy-to-read Judaical information.

#### CyberMusilm Information Collective

http://www.uoknor.edu/cybernuslim/ The Collective describes itself as an interactive guide to Islamic resources on the Internet, including audio and text excerpts from the Koran.

#### CyberZen

http://www.iudy.net/~bdmoore/cyberzeu.html

Focusing on Zen Buddhism and Taoism, this site offers essays and translations of religious texts.

#### Distinctive Churches Home Pages

http://www.best.com/~nodakid/ church.html

True to its name, this service links you to the home pages of hundreds of churches encompassing various Christian denominations in the United States, Canada and several other countries.

#### Global Hindu Electronic Network: The Hindu Universe

http://rbhatnagar.csm.uc.edu:8080/ hindu\_universe.html

Here you'll find a vast repository of



Hindu teachings and culture. The site includes complete scriptural texts, the latest religious news from India, and links to sites with pictures and descriptions of Hindu temples.

#### **Library of God**

http://convex.uky.edu:80/~rtcvit00/atemple.html

Visit this site to review papers on scholarly topics related to religion, ranging from the history of the Southern Baptist Church to a treatise entitled "Calvin and the Astronomical Revolution."

#### **Mysticism in World Religions**

http://www.bga.com/~vlp/dwp/mys-tic/index.html

Look here for explorations of a variety of mystical themes, such as grace and desire, through quotations taken from Christian, Buddhist and Hindu texts.

#### Origin: The Meeting Place of Religions

http://www.rain.org/~origin/ori-gin2.html

This ambitious project aims to combine "science, humanistic philosophy and the spiritual insights of every culture in a multi-faceted dialogue." The home page is short on graphics, but offers many links to religious projects and reference materials.

#### **Shamash Home Page**

http://shamash.uyseruet.org/

Oriented as much toward religious leaders as laypeople, this site provides links to every notable Jewish resource on the Internet, including Chabad-Lubavitch in Cyberspace (itself a rich repository of information) and B'nai B'rith Interactive.

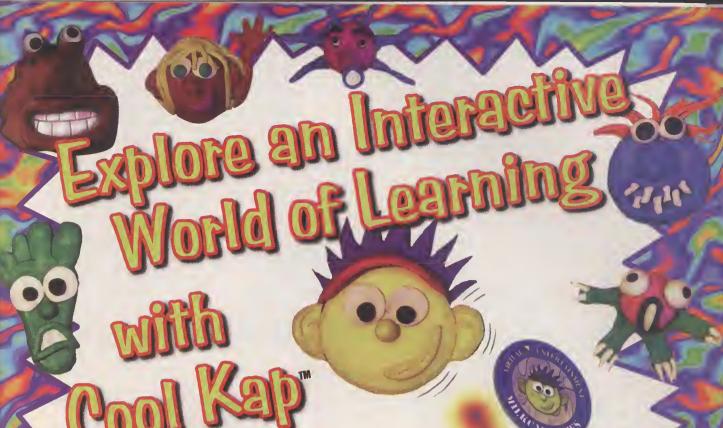
#### **TorahFax**

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Written and published by Rabbi Zalmen Marozov of Montreal, this site
offers a daily explanation of Jewish
teachings or a portion of the Torah.
You can request a complimentary email subscription by sending a note
to Torahfax@netaxis.qc.ca.

#### **Yahoo Religion Subdirectory**

http://www.yahoo.com/society\_and\_culture/religion/

This directory, with more than 1,400 listings, lets you search for sites by keyword, and will link you to sites covering Asatru, Zoroastrianism and everything in between. —J.S.



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Oklahoma City, a Red Cross volunteer who had been helping people at the scene arrived in the room. "He shared with us in great depth the complexity of his feelings as he tried to help the families whose loved ones had been lost," says Father Keenan.

Important religious figures have turned up on the on-line services as well. John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York, participated in a live chat on Prodigy last December. This past September, AOL hosted on the sixth night of the eight-day Passover festival, rather than on the traditional first and second nights.

"Computer interaction can be isolating," says Rev. Paul Soukup, a Jesuit priest who teaches in the communications department at the University of Santa Clara in California. "I think many of the religious aspects of our lives require some face-to-face connection. It's all too easy on-line to create your own world and then hide behind it."

Indeed, Rabbi Rabishaw, publisher of the Rockdale Online Digest, was initially taken aback when he encountered members of his congregation "who preferred to communicate with me via cyberspace rather than come into my office to talk." But

he quickly realized that the anonymity of online communication makes it easier for people who are feeling insecure about their faith to broach the subject at all.

"What we manage to do is bring people into the temple who would never have been involved," he says. "Even though they're coming in electronically, they're still involved in the religious process."



A priest worries that 'computer' interaction can be isolating.... It's easy to create your world and hide.'

a conference with the Dalai Lama, the spiritual head of Lamaism, a sect of Buddhism found in Tibet and Mongolia; the following month, AOL offered live coverage of the Pope's mass in Baltimore.

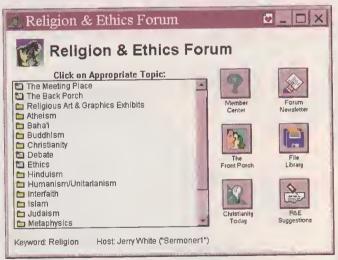
Prodigy has even experimented with online religious ceremonies. Last spring, it hosted an interfaith Easter service, followed three days later by a Passover seder. Father

Keenan and Presbyterian minister Byron Shafer presided over the Easter service, in which participants simply followed along with the invocation, call to prayer, Bible readings and homily as they scrolled down the screen.

The seder, on the other hand, more closely resembled an on-line conference. Sections of the Haggadah, the text read at the ritual dinner, were posted on-line. But more than the traditional Four Questions were asked. "It was a chance for people to talk with some of the leaders in Reform Judaism," says Dru Greenwood, director of outreach for the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), which sponsored the event. It was

like many family gatherings—"a little chaotic, but wonderful," she says.

Not surprisingly, few religious leaders believe virtual ceremonies will ever replace real ones, but some worry about the implications. Dru acknowledges that some rabbis were troubled by the on-line seder because they thought it would undermine the notion of gathering that's central to the traditional seder. To make sure people didn't use it as a substitute for a real seder, it was scheduled



On AOL, people post questions they won't ask local clergy.

While some leaders say they're simply waiting to see how the new medium will evolve, one thing is clear: Religious topics are already flourishing on the on-line services and the Internet, and people are taking the opportunity to explore. In cyberspace, if the spirit is willing, little else matters.

Jeremy Schlosberg is a HomePC contributing editor. You can send him comments on this story at Jeremy513@aol.com.



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## Tust Sew

BYANITA

RABIN OFF-GOLDMAN

ost clothes shoppers eventually accept a simple fact: Outside the pages of *Vogue*, no one's a perfect size *anything*. That's one of the reasons I took up sewing in high school. Rather than comb the racks in frustration, I made my own clothes until my college graduation.



But once I began working, I no longer had the time to painstakingly fit commercial patterns to my figure. And when I later tried to make clothes for my two daughters, even those patterns often were just a little off.

So the seamstress in me perked up when I read about pattern-making software for home PCs: Just plug in your measurements and out pops a pattern that's right every time. Even better, you can modify that perfect pattern easily to create hundreds of styles.

It seemed too good to be true. Inspired by the approaching holidays and the new software, I decided to try to create festive outfits for my daughter Lily, 14, and myself. Lily had her heart set

Seams like old times: With the help of pattern-making software, onetime clothesmaker Anita returns to the fold.

#### JUST SEW STORIES

on a red silk dress, and I couldn't resist trying to make a funky blouse similar to the one I'd spotted in the window of a chic local boutique.

Dress Shop looked like a promising program for Lily's dress. It's organized into five sections: dress, blouse, skirt, pants and outerwear (jackets). Each category contains a number of styles (such as an A-line, pleated and wrap skirt) and features (collars, cuffs, waistlines and hem styles), all of which you can see on screen. The patterns are predesigned, but by no means confining;

both liked. I quickly discovered it was a snap to use this type of software; it was more of a challenge for Lily to stay still as I took her measurements—all 40 of them—following the manual's instructions. I plugged the numbers into my 486/33 PC, printed the pattern and used it to make a sample dress in muslin. Lily couldn't wait to try it on, but after a glance in the mirror she wore a disappointed look on her face—the dress seemed askew, and the bodice was too loose in some areas and too tight in others.

Lily tried on the sample dress I made on my first try, but after a glance in the mirror, she wore a disappointed look—the garment was too tight in spots, too loose in others.

for instance, there are about 325 ways to design a dress and 36 possible combinations for a blazer.

Lily and I found a basic sheath pattern we

I vowed to try again. This time, I intensified my effort to get the measurements right by watching Dress Shop's companion video and placing several calls to the software



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#### JUST SEW STORIES

maker's friendly technical-support staff. But no matter how I measured, I couldn't get the sloper—the initial pattern that conforms exactly to your measurements—to fit Lily just right. Finally, I lost patience and gave up.

If you have more experience with measurements than I do, Dress Shop will lead you step by step through drafting and printing your pattern, and then assembling a garment from it. The software lets you accept or adjust the recommended wearing ease—the amount of material added to a sloper to produce a final pattern, ensuring the garment drapes correctly and won't rip at the seams when you walk in it—by typing in the amount you need before the final pattern is drafted. While the

#### Undaunted by the *disappointing* dress, we pressed on with plans for a *red silk blouse*.

program won't calculate the amount of material you need to make the garment, the manual will teach you how to accurately measure yardage by hand. The manual also provides detailed instructions on how to alter a printed pattern; for example, you can add a yoke to put a Western accent on a basic blouse.

After the dress disappointment, Lily obligingly set her sights on a long-sleeved blouse—happy at least that we'd take another crack at working the red silk into her wardrobe—with a short, fitted black velvet skirt. This time, I

Soft wear:
Anita reviews
dress styles.

tried Fittingly Sew, a program that demands fewer measurements; if you're lucky enough to be a standard size (alas, Lily and I are not), you can skip the measurement fuss altogether.

I selected predesigned basic patterns for the skirt and blouse, and used the measurements I'd taken for Lily's dress. Fittingly Sew's excellent cross-referenced manual includes step-by-



Software helped eliminate hemming and hawing about how Lily's outfit would look.

step instructions for manipulating pieces of a pattern; for instance, you can reshape the collar or sleeves, create a facing or yoke, add tucks and remove darts. To spice up the look, I modified the blouse with a gathered sleeve. It turned out to be so easy to adjust the pattern that I added a V-neck for good measure.

I printed the patterns—it took 20 sheets of paper for the blouse and six for the skirt—and taped them all together to form the full-size patterns. They worked beautifully, and Lily was thrilled with her new outfit. (Still miffed by my failure in Dress Shop, I tried drafting the blouse in that program, too, but

the pattern just didn't fit as well.)

Fittingly Sew is the only program I saw that lets you design garments from scratch; I decided to use it to make a pattern to duplicate the flowing, multifabric blouse that caught my eye at the boutique. I selected the basic blouse pattern and chose the maximum wearing ease. Using the mouse, my own design sense and drawing skill, I adjusted lines and curves until the image on screen looked almost exactly like the top I had admired. Next, it was my turn to stand patiently while my husband, Ken, measured me. The PC churned out a perfect pattern. (If you lack

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### SUST SEW STORIES

sewing experience, you'll face some hurdles; the manual ignores calculating yardage and leaves out tips for assembling a garment.)

To make slacks to go with the blouse, I turned to Personal Patterns Classics Women and Children, which includes basic patterns for 20 blouses, three skirts and four pants styles. There are a few options for collars, but facings and waistbands have to be created on paper. Unlike Dress Shop and Fittingly Sew, Personal Patterns excludes seam lines from its patterns; these, too, have to be added by hand after the pattern prints out.

The program manual wasn't much help; it provides simple measuring information but leaves other basics up to you—how to con-

### Now, Lily and I can't wait to wear our *holiday* best; meanwhile, I'm designing for spring.

struct the garment, make buttonholes or sew pockets, for example. It also fails to note that the program's fitted bodice styles omit the wearing ease, which you must add to your own measurements when drafting a garment.

l spotted a pattern for pleated pants that I thought would go well with the blouse. I plugged in my measurements to create the pattern (I could have skipped this step if I were a standard size). The pattern produced a

#### SHOPPER'S GUIDE

Here's how to get more information on the patternmaking software mentioned in this article.

**Dress Shop 2.0** 

LivingSoft, (800) 626-1262, (916) 253-2700 \$129.95 (DOS)

Demo: \$10 on disk, or free download from Compu-Serve's Fiber Crafts Forum (look for *ds2dem.exe*). Measuring video: \$19.95, or \$12.95 with purchase of Dress Shop 2.0. *Circle #401* 

**Fittingly Sew** 

Bartley Software, (800) 661-5209, (613) 829-6488 \$169 (Windows, Macintosh)
Demo: free on disk. Circle #402

#### **Personal Patterns**

Water Fountain Software, (212) 929-6204 Classics Jackets, \$199 (DOS, Windows); Classics Women, \$129 (Windows); Classics Women and Children \$179 (DOS). Demos: \$10 each on disk. Circle #403

Note: Before you buy any software, check your computer owner's manual to determine operating system, microprocessor, memory and disk space. Then read the software box or consult a salesperson to be sure the program and your computer are compatible. All prices are suggested or estimated retail.

pair of nicely styled pants that fit perfectly.

Classics Jackets, another program in the Personal Patterns series, gives you five basic styles with up to six variations on each, as well as patterns for pants and skirts. Unlike Classics Women and Children, this edition's man-



Just as you sew shall you reap: Auita made herself au outfit just like one iu au expeusive shop.

ual contains helpful measuring information, illustrations, yardage estimates and a list of notions to complete the garment. The program also includes detailed instructions for sewing the jacket, a handy feature for a hefty job.

Now, Lily and I can't wait to wear our new holiday best. I've promised Ken and our 10-year-old daughter, Davia, that I'll make outfits for them as soon as I find pattern-making software in their sizes. For now, Personal Patterns Classics Women and Children is the only program I know of with patterns for kids—basic T-shirts, tops, skirts and pants, for toddlers through girls up to 5 feet tall and boys up to 5 feet 6 inches—but the plain styles don't seem worth the time it takes to make them.

It looks like our PC and sewing machine will be in demand this winter. Lily's dropping hints about a new jeans jacket, so I've encouraged her to see if sewing's in her genes. Meanwhile, I've been designing my own spring wardrobe—and I hope it won't be long before I have it all sewn up. •

Anita Rabinoff-Goldman, an award-winning quilt artist, lives in Feura Bush, N.Y. She also sews custom-made prayer shawls. You can send her e-mail at argart@aol.com.

# Concessions OF A GAME ADDICT:



Day 1: I was driving down the freeway eating a chili dog, shifting into fifth, balancing a copy of WIREP on my lap, when the cellular rang. It was Bob from Sierra. He wanted to know if I could write reviews for a bunch of new CD games they had coming out.

I had 40 days, 15 games, and a closet full of sunflower seeds, instant coffee and Pop Tarts.

HOW COULD I SAY NO?

# Vay S: I'm not sure hapter 6 of Phantasmagoria

## GABRIEL KNIGHT®:



The top two computer gaming magazines both named the first Gabriel Knight mystery the best adventure game of the year in 1994. Creator Jane Jensen might want to start dusting off her awards shelf again, as The Beast Within mixes a strange, new brew of mutilation murders, a centuries-old curse, and criminal misdeeds on multiple CDs.

Gabriel Knight, a detective of the supernatural, is summoned to Munich to investigate a series of murders blamed on werewolves. The edge-of-your-seat tale unfolds to implicate the mad King Ludwig II, a lost Wagner opera, and Gabriel's own dark past.

Shrewd thinking and paying attention to details are rewarded as players unravel clues while taking on the role of Gabriel and his partner, Grace Nakimura. Shot on location in Germany and the U.S. with more than 40 surprisingly talented actors, The Beast Within is possibly the most visually stunning, realistic adventure game to come out on CD this year. Even the photo on the box is enough to induce a minor heart palpitation.



INTERACTIVE CINEMA The rich, realistic movie-like look of The Beast Within came from shooting more than 1,000

backgrounds here and in Germany.





Unless you've spent the last couple of years spelunking in Zanzibar, you've already heard of Phantasmagoria. Now it's finally here with all the

elements of a big hit: a master story teller in the person of Kings Quest® creator Roberta Williams, feature-film quality footage, and a story so rich and elaborate it took a record-setting seven CDs to contain it all.

The tale of Don and Adrienne's bizarre discoveries about their newly-acquired mansion is told in realistic live video. No, you don't watch a movie and then click on a plot option. You run this show.

But the thrill of Phantasmagoria isn't simply the technology, it's also the story. As Adrienne explores her new home, its dusty secrets begin to reveal themselves. The original owner, an illusionist, died in the house after the suspicious disappearances of his



INTERACTIVE NIGHTMARE The most film footage ever shot for a CD game lends Phantasmagoria the sinister qualities of a great horror feature film



what's more frightening:
or my face.

# SMAGORIA

many wives. An evil force still inhabits the maze of rooms, and its effect on Don is disturbing, terrifying, and deadly.

With perseverance and wit, you can discover the clues that save Adrienne from Don, and Don from himself. This is truly the kind of game you'll find yourself staying up all night to play. And, with its decidedly macabre storyline, the middle of the night may be Phantasmagoria's finest hour.





HORROR ON 7 CDS Players control every movement of Adrienneand this game doesn't "show" you anything. You have to find it.





# DARYL F. GATES POLICE QUEST:



When he headed the L.A.P.D.. Chief Daryl F. Gates founded SWAT, the first Special Weapons And Tactics team. Now these highly trained forces are the elite of law enforcement, while Gates' Police Quest: SWAT stands as the elite in tactical simulation games.

In this, the fifth installment of the successful PQ series, you join a

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The video action was shot using actual SWAT officers at their training facilities and in the streets of L.A. to lend an unmistakable air of realism. At least some of the country's major police departments think so-they now use Police Quest CDs to train their officers.



DEAD-ON AUTHENTICITY Police Quest: SWAT doesn't kid around:

blow a decision, fail to communicate or mishandle your weapons and you're toast. WIN'95 WIN DOS MAC







# Day 14: My family keeps bugging told them, can t

# TO BIN'S PASSAGE



Leave it to Al Lowe-creator of some of the most entertaining and enduring computer games—to unleash *Torin's Passage* on the world.

In coming up with this remarkable new game, he has delivered to our CD drives an adventure game with as much intrigue and brain-twisting challenge as any hard-core gamer has ever tackled *AND* a funny, musically-rich, visual treat that takes gaming to a new level.

Torin's Passage is the story of a young man's encounters in the nested worlds beneath the surface of the planet, Strata. These bizarre lands, replete with flowing hot lava, unworldly creatures, and a host of other cunning obstacles, must be traversed if Torin is to reach his goal.

Making matters worse (for Torin, more exciting for you) is a formidable line-up of

brain-teasing puzzles at the end of each chapter-all of them, double black diamond challenges.

There is one word to describe the artistry in *Torin's*: "whoa!" Multi-plane scrolling, spectacular backgrounds, and hand-drawn cel animation add a depth and realism you've never seen in a game before. The sheer talent and imagination of the artists is, by itself, worth the price of admission.

But your eyes aren't the only things that get to dip into the candy box. *Torin's* also features an original digital music score composed by three-time Oscar<sup>TM</sup> winner, Michel Legrand.

There's a pop-up TelePrompTer™ that lets you replay dialogue to listen for crucial clues, plus a 3-D interface with online hints for the less-experienced players. There was, however, one hint missing: How do you avoid work, eating, chores and sleep so you can play *Torin's Passage* endlessly?



THE WONDER DOWN UNDER The subterranean worlds of Torin's Passage provides the setting for a challenging quest with brain-teasing puzzles and humor.





me to let them play Torin's Passage.



It's amazing to think that the same computer used to balance the family checkbook can produce an even bigger scare. What's required is the addition of a terror-filled, nail-biting, spinetingling CD like Shivers.

In this new game aimed at teens and adults, players must rely on their

wits and raw nerve to survive a nightmarish trip through a surreal, abandoned museum. The goal is to vanquish the ghosts and phantoms that haunt the museum before they steal your life's essence.

Along the way, a series of beads-of-sweat-producing puzzles await, along with chilling moments of live-action video that delivers twists and turns in the plot.

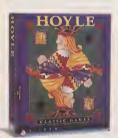
Shivers sets a haunting stage through an eerie original music score and "as seen through your own eyes" graphics. The first-person views are handsomely rendered, you might even say "mystical." But the real draw remains the story.

It tantalizes, draws you in, and-fittingly-gives you the shivers. This is definitely one game that will keep you glued to your seat. Or, at least, the very edge of it.



NOT HOME, NOT ALONE Players have to spend the night on guard in search of the evil spirits that haunt a sinister, derelict museum.

# CLASSIC



"According to Hoyle" means "by the rules; done the right way." This remarkably sophisticated collection of 10 favorite games lives up to its name, giving families great variety, totally accurate play action, and an interesting twist on the old idea of playing against the computer.

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rogue's gallery of computerized competitors. Take on a crusty, old prospector, an over-the-hill movie star, or a number of other players, each sporting an accent and an attitude.

The more you play, the more sides you'll see to their weird, witty personalities. Add in their different card-playing styles, and you end up with a much more fun (and realistic) way to challenge the microchips to a game.

Along with five card draw, you can also play bridge, solitaire, old maid, hearts, crazy 8's, gin rummy, checkers, backgammon, and hearts. With its cast of characters and jam-packed variety, you'll definitely want to ante up for this card game.

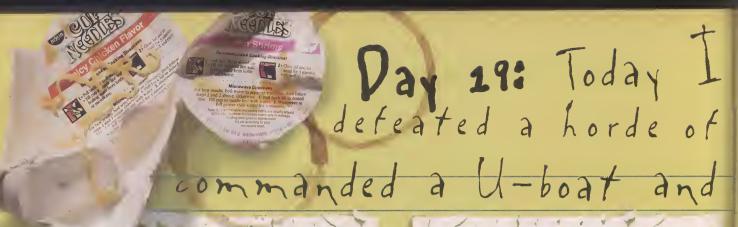


TEN GAMES IN ONE Hoyle® Classic Games give you ten card and

board games and 10 animated competitors to outwit. The "Hoyle" trademark is used under license from Brown & Bigelow, Inc







### TROPHY BASS



Surely you've seen them. Those guys on cable TV, sitting in a boat, reeling in a big one, saying stuff to each other like, "Oh, he's got a lot of fight in him there, Jim."

At last count, there were 50 million people in this country like Jim who love to feel the tug on a rod. And now they've got their own

computer game: Trophy Bass.

There are three sides to *Trophy Bass*. You can choose tackle, pick your bait, read the water, set the weather conditions, and then finesse your casting technique on one of five virtual lakes. Option two is to play in Tournament Mode and try your luck against conditions and competitors dished out by the computer.

Or you can get even more serious and watch the full motion video "how-to" section and pick up more than 100 nuggets of solid advice from America's top tournament bass fishermen.

Now, obviously, the Jims of the world are going to love this game, because playing can bring you more success out on the water. But, surprisingly, you don't have to know what a lunker bucketmouth is to get a charge out of *Trophy Bass*. As Jim would say, "It's a keeper."



CAST OF THOUSANDS The super-accurate simulation and detailed how-to information earned Trophy Bass the endorsement of B.A.S.S., America's largest fishing organization.

WIN'95 WIN

### **CAESAR**II



A city simulation? Hmmm, haven't I seen something like this before? Yes and no. Yes, you've seen amazingly-detailed 3D renderings before. And, yes, you've played sims that put you in the municipal driver's seat.

But, no, you've never played anything quite like *Caesar II*. For starters, if you do a good job

quelling riots, dowsing fires, recruiting soldiers and building great cities, you earn approval ratings that grant you the right to take on another province.

Then it really heats up. Along with wearing your city planner hat, you get to don the general's helmet and fight off hordes of barbarians in battle sequences (check out the Carthaginians on armored elephants). With each additional province you control, the closer you get to the best hat of all: the emperor's snappy laurel wreath.

By combining great graphics, intricate strategizing and battle action, *Caesar II* isn't merely simulation. It's *stimulation* for those who hanker for action and power.



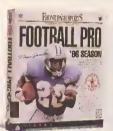
BUILT IN A DAY? The historical accuracy and detail in Caesar II's cityscapes are astonishing, while battle sequences—a twist for sim games—add another layer of challenge and fun.

WIN'95 DOS



fished for bass, barbarians,

### FRONT PAGE SPORTS DOTBALL P



When Football Pro '95 was hailed as "the best football game on the planet," you'd think Sierra would send in the third string and retire to the locker room for a tall,

frosty one. But, no. They put the pads back on, threw out the old playbook, and came back with Football Pro '96.

It keeps all the things that earned its forefathers the Best Sports Simulation award three years running: Slavish attention to real NFL player and team stats, a play book with over 10,000 combinations of X's and O's, and league play over CompuServe.

Ah, but that's the old stuff. For 1996, you can suit up as a player for an arcade game or appoint yourself coach for the football sim. What's more, 3D animations were created using films of actual players shot from dozens of angles simultaneously, so tailbacks juke, wide receivers sprint, and linemen grunt just like their reallife counterparts. The awesome realism of this new version is sure to earn some accolades. "Best football game in the solar system?" Could be.



THIS IS NOT TV The "motion capture" based 3D animation will have you think you've tuned in to the NFL game of the week. But this is better; No commercials.





Now hear this. All personnel who want to see how the Simulation Game of the Year has been improved, report to vour software dealer. COMMANN: Aces of the Deep, with its incre ble realism and historical accuracy, has taken a giant leap forward with the addition of phenomenal

texture-mapped graphics and voice activation.

With Windows® 95 and IBM VoiceType®, you bark commands at your U-boat crew and watch them respond to your orders to dive, surface, fire torpedoes, and more. While you don't need the voice command option to play the game, it adds yet another dimension to the realism.

Your strategic skills get a sweat-producing workout in the cat-and-mouse pursuit sequences, while a new two-mode deck gun lets you play a more arcade-style game. Here, you get to do to other ships what COMMAND has done to other simulation games: Blow them out of the water.



DIVE! DIVE! Shout out the orders, and your crew reacts on the double in the first voice-activated CD-ROM simulation game ever IBM VoiceType is a registered trademark of IBM Corporation.



# Day 27: It took 3 but I finally reached Level

## J-D ULTRA PINBALL



The pinball wizards at Sierra have just come up with a better idea on how to stick five vertical feet of pinball machine onto seven inches of computer screen. While most other pinball games show you the table as if it were shot pointing straight up, Sierra's 3-D Ultra Pinball slants the table so you can see the whole thing easily without scrolling. This bit of clevemess was then totally exploited with the most amazing spacescape graphics to appear this side of Alpha Centauri.

Another innovation: 3-D Ultra Pinball uses advanced physics formulas to give you an uncannily accurate feel of a real table. Thanks to genius programming from some people who weren't sleeping during Physics class, flipper responsiveness, table bumping, ball rolling and ricochets look and react just like an authentic tavem machine. It even tilts like classic pinball. Damn!

The game's three tables can be interconnected so you can keep going until the sun comes up. And action on all versions is super fast; an amazing feat especially for a Windows® game. If there's one downside to this addictive game, it may be that the garbage isn't going to get taken out for a while, and the dog may have to start walking himself.



FAST AND FURIOUS The full dimensional graphics of 3-D Ultra Pinball haven't slowed things down.
Action is fast, frenzied, and richly animated.



# THE



Now that the Windows® 95 frenzy is going full tilt, you may wonder, "is there a game specifically designed for this amazingly cool new operating system that takes full advantage of its multi-threading capa-

bilities?" Or perhaps you'd like to know, "is there a game so incredibly wicked that it will actually increase my supply of testosterone?"









The answer to both questions: Yes. And you're looking at it.

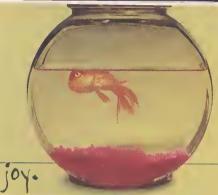
Thexder flies, runs, jumps, morphs into a tank or plane, and blasts his way through five worlds, each with ten different levels of increasing hair-pulling difficulty.

Your job in all this is to help *Thexder* work his way through mind-numbing mazes while steering clear of energy fields, sheer drop offs, and other assorted game-enders. Then, in addition to robots, aliens, cyborgs and other





o of Thexder. member of the family jumped for joy.



# XDE

enemies, Thexder also has to contend with burning lava, crushing ceilings, and unpredictable explosives.

Thanks to your droid-fast reflexes, and Thexder's ability to morph, you can struggle your way to the 50th level to face Primus Tech, the numero uno enemy. Actually, there are other enemies you can take on: the bad dudes you play against on your network or your modem.

All this battling is supercharged courtesy of Windows® 95. Along with the main horizontally-scrolling action window, there are five additional screens to keep you filled in on your position, available equipment, enemies and weapons. Due to that multi-threading business,



every screen is constantly updated without slowing down the main action one hair.

Thexder-sure to be one of the season's best sellers-has arrived, pumped on Windows® 95 steroids, and ready to do some serious damage.



LIKE A MALL MOVIE THEATRE The five screens of Thexder churu out loads of info and action simultaneously. It's all made possible by the only game to take advantage of the multi-threading abilities of Windows® 95.



### AST DYNASTY



Last Dynasty isn't the best new game to come along in a while. It's more like two of the best.

Start by parking yourself in its first-person, full-view, real-time combat simulator. The completely customizable cockpit, with continuous on-line help, locks on and destroys typical space fight games. The information overload as you

plan an attack, while your radar and windshield fills with enemy ships, is truly stomach-churning. Then comes an even cooler part: You can grab a momentary breath during all this chaos by switching into strategy mode, where you can map out and execute your next attack from a mega-choice of battle strategies.

Carrying the action game forward are spectacular interactive cinema clips, haunting original music, and enough mindracking tension to have you sweating an arsenal worth of bullets.

While the action side of this equation beats most pure space arcade CDs at their own game, Last Dynasty shines again in the fully-rendered, high res scenes in the adventure portion of the game. This mind-puzzler takes place aboard a multi-level space station. From a first-person angle you explore, look for clues, remove a few ruthless strangers, and keep your nerve endings on alert-mode in wait for a surprise attack.

Consider Last Dynasty as an excellent, addictive, warp speed, mysterious, challenging, over-stim'd value.



DOUBLE YOUR PLEASURE If you can't make up your mind between the action overload of a space fight, or the brain tease of an adventure game, Last Dynasty gives you both.

# Day 39: Help! My reviews Jare due tomorrow and I'm stuck in Mary, Mary Quite Contrary's garden. Where's my 4-year old?

# THE LOST MIND OF DR BRAIN



You have to love something that makes your kids smarter, keeps them happily occupied for hours, and *isn't* TV. In this case, that something is *The Lost Mind of Dr. Brain*.

This third installment in the immensely popular *Dr. Brain* series gives kids 10 different wildly entertaining puzzles to solve—each chal-

lenging the 10 learning centers in real live kid brains. Some involve mazes, others memory games, and there's plenty of fun with words and music. Since you can set the degree of difficulty, both ten-year olds and teens can have their brains put to the test.

But here's the real truth. These puzzles are also a blast for those of us who, ahem, haven't doodled on a Pee Chee for many moons. (My favorite: sending the right colored balls down the railroad track maze to the station.)

So don't get the idea this is some stuffy, bookish "learning aid." The puzzles are pure fun, surprisingly funny, and always a challenge. If you've got kids, buying *The Lost Mind of Dr. Brain* is clearly a no brainer.



BRAIN CENTRAL There's an object to this game: Help restore
Dr. Brain's brain which he accidentally



### MIXED-UP MOTHER GOOSE

DELUXE



The list of the awards *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* has won from magazines, parents' groups and the software industry could fill up the rest of this page. And no wonder. Here is a game that has introduced more than 500,000 little ones to the

computer, while helping build their problem-solving and learning skills.

Sounds like a textbook? It's not. In the new deluxe version of *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* kids search through Mother Goose Land to find missing objects from classic rhymes. A successful recovery is rewarded with a song—but not like you've ever heard before. Imagine "Little Jack Horner" done in reggae and you'll get the idea.

The game can be played in English or Spanish, and there's a free bonus audio CD of the 18 songs in the game so kids can sing along after you've commandeered the computer so you can play your games.



TAKE A GANDER Mother Goose Land is laid out in beautiful,

hand-painted graphics, with dozens of places for kids to explore.

WIN'95

WIN



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transferred to his rodent assistant, Rathbone

Pay 42: Fried my computer. Entered Sierra Sweepstakes to win IBM. Aptiva "Ultimate Gamer." We're giving away five IBM Aptiva "Ultimate Gamer" systems with Pentium® 133 Mhz processor, 16 MB RAM, 3.4 GB HF, Six Speed CD-ROM, 16-Bit Wavetable sound, 3-D graphics card, 2 stereo speakers with sub-woofer, and a 17" SVGA monitor (15.7" viewable image size). You want? Option A: Scour all 10 pages of the Sierra ad, answer the questions below, send the card back to us by February 14, 1996 and pray mightily to the game gods. Option B: Buy your own by calling IBM PC Direct at 1-800-IBM-2-YOU. Which Sierra game comes with 7 CD-ROMs? Which Sierra game takes place in an abandoned museum? Which Sierra game visits subterranean worlds? Which Sierra game features voice activation? Name Address No purchase necessary. Offer good in USA only, Sweepstakes is open to residents of the US over 18 years of question, one entry per household. Winners will be announced on Sierra forums on-line and in Entries will be randomly selected and answers verified for Spring issue of InterAction. For a list of winners, available You may use this card or enter on a plain 3x5-inch card. correctness to identify and select winners. Winners will be 90 days after Sweepstake drawing, send a stamped self-All federal, state and local laws apply. Taxes, if any, are the selected Fehruary 15, 1996. Grand Prizes will be shipped to addressed envelope to Winners List e/o Sierra On-Line, P.O. sole responsibility of the prize winners. Decisions of the judges are final and binding. Offer void where prohibited by law. Employees and family members of Sierra On-Line or winners at address shown on entry form. Total approximate Box 53210, Bellevue, WA 98015-3210. value of Grand Prize is \$5,000 each. Winner cannot transfer prize. Prize is not redeemable for eash. IBM Corporation are not eligible. Odds of winning depend Each winner will be required to sign a release allowing upon number of entries received. Only one answer per Sierra to use his or her name and likeness in advertising IBM is a registered trademark of International Business Machines Corporation. Aptiva is a trademark of IBM. Pentium is a registered trademark of Intel Corporation Day 48: Bought two Sierra games, got a third free\*. Free game was actually not junk. Hard to believe, but there are even more Sierra games than we could squeeze into this ad. So check them all out by going to the place where you like to buy games or call 1-800-757-7707 and order directly from Sierra. Then, when you buy any two games from the list below between November 1, 1995 and January 31, 1996, you can select one more from the other side of this card and we'll send it to you for free. ☐ Adi's Comprehensive Learning System ☐ Last Dynasty ☐ Shivers ☐ Caesar II ☐ Lode Runner On-Line ☐ Space Quest 6 □ COMMAND: Aces of the Deep ☐ Lost Mind of Dr. Brain ☐ Thexder ☐ Front Page Sports: Football Pro '96 ☐ Mixed-Up Mother Goose Deluxe □ 3-D Ultra Pinball ☐ Gabriel Knight: The Beast Within ☐ Outpost 1.5 ☐ The Incredible Machine 3.0 ☐ Hoyle® Classic Games Phantasmagoria ☐ Torin's Passage ☐ Kings Quest VII, 2.0 ☐ Police Ouest: SWAT ☐ Trophy Bass ☐ Print Artist 3.0 Well, OK, free plus \$5.95 for postage and handling.



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N  $\nabla$ 

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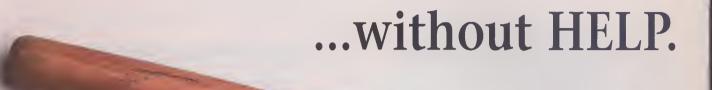
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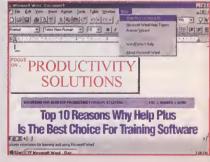
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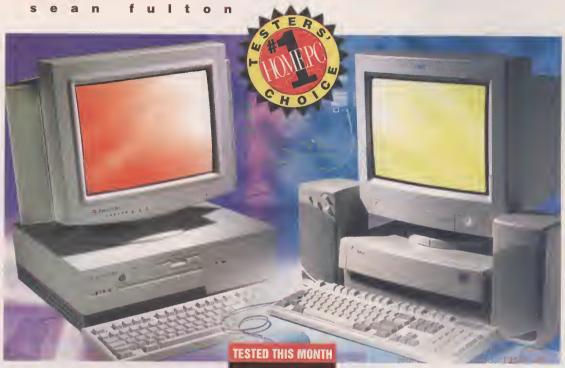


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### consumer labyou rate the products

### Our PC jury feels most at home with IBM, Packard Bell



Make no mistake about it: Consumers shopping for a computer have their work cut out for them. Computer veterans have all seen firsthand how fast the state of the art changes, and they know the risks. The perfectly respectable system you buy could look a bit raggedy when you hear friends raving about a hot new feature in their PCs, leaving you to spend more money for an upgrade—or simply do without. For inexperi-

**Computers** 

- ★ Aptiva M50
- ★ Legend 814CD
- HP Pavilion P75
- Gateway P5-100
- Performa 5215CD
- Presario 7170
- Epson ActionTower 8200MM
- Midwest Micro
   Elite
- Quantex P5/90
- ★ Globalyst-363
- Advantage P100

enced buyers, the pressure can be intense; there are mysterious terms to contend with, and many seemingly similar products on computer-store shelves.

So, is every consumer fated to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune at the computer store? Of course not—if you do your homework.

The best remedy for the angst is preparation. The more you know about the features and technology to look for in a new PC before you set foot in the stores, the greater the chance you'll emerge with a system that will look as good to you in a year as it does the day you get it home.

In this month's Consumer Lab, we examine some of the most important features to consider when you shop. And, to add some real-life experience to our general shopping ad-



Elleu, a local television reporter, got the inside story on PC setup.

vice, we offered a team of consumers the ultimate opportunity for risk-free comparison-shopping: We

For consumers worried about buying a system today that won't be able to run cvcr-faster software tomorrow, the companies that supplied the computers for our tests provided one important clue: Not one of these systems uses a processor slower than a 75-MHz Pentium or PowerPC chip. While HomePC recommends a 90-MHz Pentium as a sensible choice for a new PC as a hedge against the future, you'll see that many of our testers were fully satisfied with the everyday performance of some systems based on a 75-MHz chip.

However, HomePC's technical-performance tests, developed in conjunction with our sister publication, Windows Magazine, generally showed a significant lag in speed between the 75-MHz machines and most PCs based on 90- or 100-MHz processors (see page 268). Not sur-

ehips, such as Packard Bell's Legeud 814CD. Whatever the chip speed, other factors may keep the system from taking full advantage of its potential.

The clean sweep of Pentium machines among the manufacturers holds one more important lesson for consumers: If you're buying a PC for the long haul, there's no such thing as a good deal on a 486-based desktop PC. At the same time, unless you have a special need for speed, you probably don't have to spend the extra money for a 120- or 133-MHz Pentium chip yet. As for the new Pentium Pro (see the Gear + Gadgets report on page 434), it's earmarked this year for specialized office applications; the chip is not expected to be used in home PCs until late 1996 or early 1997.

Many PC makers tailor their PCs

## Our tests of PC speed proved one important point: A PC with a 90-MHz chip actually can be faster than a PC with a 100-MHz chip.

asked them to give 11 new computers an in-depth workout, as if they had just bought them and brought them home. They compared the machines' performance and, given their lands-on experience, declared which PC they would buy and why.

For this Lab, we recruited a team of experienced testers (all had participated in previous Consumer Labs) to get an informed opinion on the new PCs' mix of features, performance and value. After spending time testing the machines in our on-site lab, they took each PC home for about a week, so that they and their families could put the hardware to the test under real-world conditions.

#### Looking over the field

We asked 11 top U.S. PC makers (according to 1994 sales figures from Dataquest, a Santa Clara, Calif., market research firm) to select their model with the best mix of price and features for our test. Be aware that each company sells a range of PCs under one "family name" (like IBM's Aptiva), which may vary in price and features from the models our testers used.

prisingly, a 100-MHz machine—the Midwest Micro Elite—was the speediest of the group. Our tests also proved another point that will

to specific customer groups, and that may affect the features you'll see in a particular computer. For example, a machine that Company A

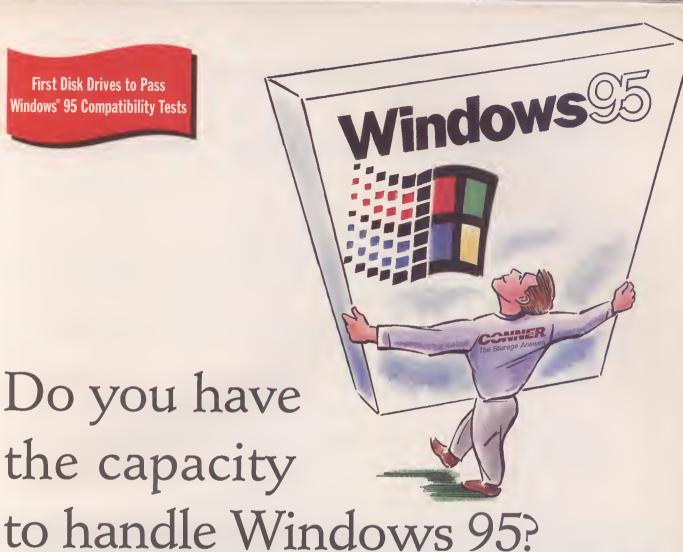


Apparel maker Kenneth liked how Packard Bell accessorized with software.

serve you well as you shop: You can't always gauge system performance by chip class alone—the 90-MHz Quantex P5/90 was faster than some PCs with 100-MHz

calls a general home multimedia computer may include wavetable synthesizers, rather than older FM synthesizers, to play rich, crisp CD-ROM game soundtracks. It's also

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### Making the grade: how 11 top computers stack up

Gene	N CO	man e e li di i	 dia

	General multimedia					
	IBM Aptiva M50	Packard Bell Legend 814CD	HP Pavilion P75	Gateway P5-100	Macintosh Performa 5215CD	
Design	В	A-	B+	B+	В	
Documentation	B+	А	В	B+	B+	
Ease of setup	A-	B+	A-	А	А	
Monitor quality	B+	A-	B+	A-	А	
Out-of-box experience	A-	B+	A	А	A-	
Overall quality	B+	B+	B+	В	В	
Overall value	B+	В	A-	В	В	
Performance	B+	А	B+	B+	B-	
Software selection	A-	A-	B+	В	В	
Sound quality	B+	В	B+	A-	C+	
Overall grade	B+ (3.58)	B+ (3.58)	B+ (3.52)	B+ (3.41)	В (3.31)	







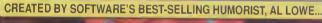




Compaq Presario 7170	Epson Action Tower 8200MM	Midwest Micro Elite	Quantex P5/90	Home-office AT&T Globalyst-363	AST Advan- tage P100
B+	B+	B-	C+	A-	В
В	В	B-	В-	B+	В
A-	A-	B+	B+	А	B+
В	А	B+	B+	B+	A-
В	B+	B+	В	А	В
В	В	В	B-	A-	B+
В	B-	B-	B-	B-	В
В	B+	B+	В	A-	B+
В	В	B+	B-	В	A-
В	В	B+	В	B+	B+
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PLAY TORIN'S PASSAGE: WHERE NOTHING IS WHAT IT APPEARS TO BE.



more likely to build in "3-D sound"—which provides "surround-sound" multimedia—and MPEG support; the latter lets you play video segments in MPEG-encoded CD-ROMs smoothly using the full screen. (See "PC Magic: It's All in the Cards" in our October issue for more on these components.)

In contrast, a machine in Company A's home-office line may offer more pre-installed business software, and might be designed in a tower (vertical) configuration that sports extra drive bays for add-in devices that are especially important to a commercial enterprise, such as an additional hard drive or a back-up unit. Of course, these are general guidelines—for instance, some PCs we saw cheased in tower configurations are marketed as general multimedia systems.

We divided our testers into two groups: Eighteen of the 24 testers



After his test, John wished he'd hooked up with HP before buying his new PC.

(RAM). If you can afford the extra expense, 16 MB is a better bet.

Hard drive capacity has gone way up, too. One-gigabyte (GB)—or 1,000 MB—drives are becoming

its first home PCs only this fall, hit the ground running: The HP Pavilion P75 finished second.

Among the home-office PCs, the AT&T Globalyst-363's 3.56 (B+)

### IBM's Aptiva and Packard Bell's Legend tied among multimedia PCs; AT&T's Globalyst went out on top in the home-office category.

examined the nine multimedia systems we received; the others sized up the two-home office PCs. As you'll see by their grades and comments, each group looked for dis-

Eveu computer specialist James Ostazewski leans on documentation.

tinct features—sound quality, bundled software and so on—that would target the needs of either a family or a home-office manager.

No matter whom it's for, a PC needs certain basics you should look for when you shop. Don't buy a new PC with less than 8 megabytes (MB) of raudom access memory

more common; most of the PCs in this review boasted at least 850-MB hard drives.

Most models we tested are sold with 14.4-Kbps fax/modems. But speed isn't all that's hot about modems this season; almost all the computers we tested have software that lets the PC act as a telephone voicemail system.

In addition to having our testers experiment with the telephony options and the included software, we made sure they gave each PC a rugged workout, from casing its internal layout to installing hardware. (For more details on a PC's internal configuration and what to look for when you shop, see "Inside Your New PC," page 280.)

#### And the winners are...

While all the PCs in this review proved to be good performers, with no model scoring lower than a B overall, our testers' scores in the general multimedia category put IBM's Aptiva M50 and Packard Bell's Legend 81+CD in a tie at the top: They each scored a 3.58 (B+). Hewlett-Packard, which introduced

finished slightly ahead of the AST Advantage P100. (After testing, AT&T announced that it's bowing out of the PC business; you'll be able to buy a Globalyst PC until at least Dec. 22, and AT&T promises it will support any machines sold.)

If you think a PC reviewed here is right for you, remember what we said at the start: Computing features change fast. Take our PC pullont card (following page 292) to the store; this handy form gives you room to compare the specs of your favorite models, and keeps *HomePC*'s recommendations within easy reach. Ask a salesperson to update you on current features.

Armed with our testers' first-hand accounts of each PC, which begin on page 282, you'll have a clear idea of the questions to ask and features to research when you compare PCs—so you can concentrate on the rewards, not the risks.

Lab assistance by Anne Clifford, Abdul Farooqi, Patrick Gaynov, Barbara Hamill, Judith Hogan, Dong Kalinonsky, Judith Levine, Mel Odemis and Sun Ying Tam. Heart-pounding-white-knuckled-Stomach-in-the-throat-racing.



In a go-kaft.

Put your pedal to the metal, 'cause the pack don't wait for Sunday drivers.

### VIRTUAL KVARTIS

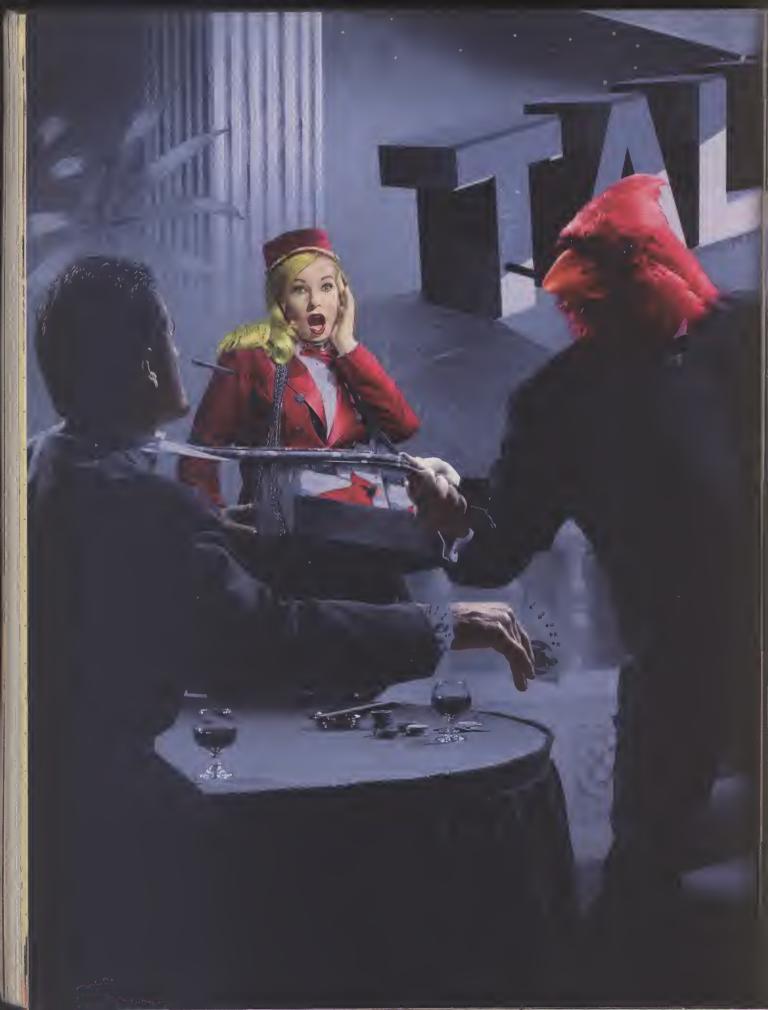
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image transmissions

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- Connect worldwide with industrystandard V.34 data transmission and V.42 error-correction
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### Picking the right computer: what's inside 11 top models

	General multimedia				
Manufacturer	IBM	Packard Bell	Hewlett-Packard	Gateway	Apple Computer
Model name	IBM Aptiva M50	Packard Bell Legend 814CD	HP Pavilion P75	Gateway P5-100	Macintosh Performa 5215CD
Processor	Intel 100-MHz Pentium	Intel 100-MHz Pentium	Intel 75-MHz Pentium	Intel 100-MHz Pentium	PowerPC 75-MHz RISC
Memory	8 MB	8 MB	8 MB	8 MB	8 MB
Hard drive capacity	1 GB	1.2 GB	850 MB	730 MB	1 GB
Floppy drives	One 3.5-inch	One 3.5-inch	One 3.5-inch	One 3.5-inch	One 3.5-inch
No. of total drive bays	4	4	4	7	3
No. of free drive bays	1	1	1	4	0
CD-ROM drive	Quad-speed (4X)	Quad-speed	Quad-speed	Quad-speed	Quad-speed
Graphics adapter	Super VGA, 1,280- by-1,024-pixel resolution	SVGA 1,024-by- 768-pixel resolution	SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	832-by-624-pixel resolution
MPEG support	Yes, software	Yes, software	No	No	Yes, hardware
Monitor	15-inch SVGA, 1,280-by-1,024- pixel resolution	15-inch SVGA, 1,024-by-768- pixel resolution	14-inch SVGA, 1,024-by-768- pixel resolution	15-inch SVGA, 1,280-by-1,024- pixel resolution	15-inch, 832-by- 624-pixel resolution
Fax/data modem	28.8-Kbps	14.4-Kbps	14.4-Kbps	14.4-Kbps	14.4-Kbps
Sound capabilities	16-bit, wavetable synthesis, 3-D sound	16-bit, FM synthe- sis, 3-D sound	16-bit, FM synthesis	16-bit, wavetable synthesis	16-bit, FM synthesis
Telephony	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Speakers	30 watts per channel	10 watts per chan- nel (with adapter)	5 watts per channel	4.5 watts per channel	Information not available
No. of ISA/PCI expansion slots	3 ISA/2 PCI	3 ISA/2 PCI	3 ISA/2 PCI	3 ISA/4 PCI	1 PDS (Processor Direct Slot)
No. of free ISA/PCI expansion slots	2 ISA/2 PCI	2 ISA/2 PCI	2 ISA/2 PCI	1 ISA/3 PCI	1 PDS
No. of free SIMM sockets	2	2	2	2	1
No. of software programs included	12	34	26	18	26
Extras	Microphone	Microphone, remote control	Microphone	No	Microphone, TV hookup
Warranty	3 years limited	1 year on-site	1 year on-site	1 year on-site, 3 years limited	1 year on-site, 1 year limited
Toll-free tech support	24 hours, 7 days a week	24 hours, 7 days a week	24 hours, 7 days a week	24 hours, 7 days a week	24 hours, 7 days a week
Customer service number	(800) 426-3333 (914) 765-1900	(800) 733-5858 (818) 865-1555	(800) 752-0900 (408) 246-4300	(800) 846-2000 (605) 232-2000	(800) 776-2333 (408) 996-1010
Price	\$2,788	\$2,699 (estimated street price)	\$2,200	\$2,524	\$2,300 (estimated street price)
Reader service	Circle #539	Circle #540	Circle #541	Circle #542	Circle #543

				Home-office computers	
Compaq	Epson	Midwest Micro	Quantex	AT&T	AST
Compaq Presario 7170	Epson Action Tower 8200MM	Midwest Micro Elite	Quantex P5/90	AT&T Globalyst- 363	AST Advantage P100
Intel 90-MHz Pentium	Intel 75-MHz Pentium	Intel 100-MHz Pentium	Intel 90-MHz Pentium	Intel 75-MHz Pentium	Intel 100-MHz Pentium
8 MB	8 MB	8 MB	16 MB	8 MB	16 MB
840 MB	850 MB	1 GB	850 MB	1 GB	1 GB
One 3.5-inch	One 3.5-inch	One 3.5-inch	One 3.5-inch	One 3.5-inch	One 3.5-inch
4	7 ·	8	11	6	7
1	4	5	8	3	4
Quad-speed	Quad-speed	Quad-speed	Quad-speed	Quad-speed	Quad-speed
SVGA, 1,024-by- 768-pixel resolution	SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	SVGA,1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution
Yes, software	No	No	No	No	Yes, software
14-inch SVGA, 1,024-by-768-pixel resolution	17-inch SVGA, 1,280-by-1,024- pixel resolution	15-inch SVGA, 1,280-by-1,024- pixel resolution	15-inch SVGA, 1,280-by-1,024- pixel resolution	15-inch SVGA, 1,024-by-768- pixel resolution	15-inch SVGA, 1,280-by-1,024- pixel resolution
14.4-Kbps	14.4-Kbps	14.4-Kbps	14.4-Kbps	14.4-Kbps	14.4-Kbps
16-bit, FM synthesis	16-bit, FM synthesis	16-bit, wavetable synthesis	16-bit, FM synthesis	16-bit, wavetable synthesis	16-bit, FM synthesis
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4 watts per channel	7 watts per channel	4.5 watts per channel	4.5 watts per channel	Information not available	7 watts per channel
3 ISA/2 PCI	3 ISA/2 PCI	4 ISA/3 PCI	4 ISA/3 PCI	5 ISA/3 PCI	5 ISA/2 PCI
2 ISA/2 PCI	2 ISA/2 PCI	2 ISA/2 PCI	2 ISA/2 PCI	4 ISA/3 PCI	2 ISA/2 PCI
2	2	2	2	4	2
31	16	6	14	22	10
Microphone	Microphone	None	None	Microphone	Microphone
3 years limited	1 year on-site	3 years limited	1 year on-site, 1 year limited	1 year on-site	1 year on-site, 2 years limited
24 hours, 7 days a week	M-F, 6 to 6 (EST)	M-F, 9 to 7; Sat, 10 to 4 (EST)	M-Th, 9 to 8; F, 9 to 6; Sat, 10 to 4 (EST)	24 hours, 7 days a week	24 hours, 7 days a week
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\$2,000	\$2,099	\$2,349	\$2,099	\$2,365	\$2,699
Circle #544	Circle #545	Circle #546	Circle #547	Circle #548	Circle #549

#### Time trials: which PC is fastest?

How fast do the systems in our Consumer Lab handle their computing chores? To find out, we conducted a series of speed tests to assess relative performance. The tests were developed by lab technicians at *Home-PC* and our sister publication, *Windows Magazine*.

The speed tests consisted of macros (programmed series of tasks) run in various programs. The Doom II test highlighted each system's ability to process graphics, and its sound quality and hard disk activity.

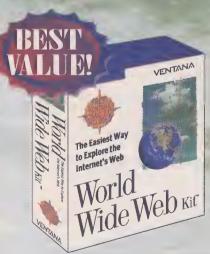
The Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia test show-cased how well the PC manages various CD-ROM tasks, including data searches, and audio and video playback. The Excel macro ran calculations and statistical math problems, a task that particularly taxes system memory and the processor.

With the exception of the IBM Aptiva M50 and AT&T Globalyst-363, the PC speed tests were conducted on machines running a copy of Windows 95

Test times recorded in seconds; a lower number indicates better performance. Numbers in bold indicate the best

Processor speed	75-MHz			90-MHz	
Manufacturer	AT&T	Epson	HP	Compaq	Quantex
Model name	Globalyst-363	Action Tower 8200MM	Pavilion P75	Presario 7170	P5/90
	S MB of RAM			S MB of RAM	
Doom II	439	386	359	367	283
Compton's	213	197	205	191	136
Excel	106	104	108	124	71
	16 MB of RAM			16 MB of RAM	
Doom II	473	378	345	344	270
Compton's	106	132	122	111	92
Excel	93	90	96	103	65





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supplied by the PC's manufacturer; IBM and AT&T did not supply such versions in time, so we installed a store-bought copy of Windows 95. Running a version of Windows 95 supplied by IBM or AT&T could have altered the results, because each would have included drivers tailored to the systems. We did not conduct speed tests on the Macintosh Performa 5215CD reviewed in the Consumer Lab this month.

The machines use different processors, which ac-

counts in part for the differences you'll see in the performance scores. In general, PCs incorporating the same processor fell in roughly the same speed range—but not always. For instance, even though the Quantex P5/90 and Compaq Presario 7170 both use a 90-MHz Pentium, the Quantex performed faster. Overall, the results of these tests show the 100-MHz Midwest Micro Elite to be the brightest all-around performer in the test group.

score for that test in each processor group.

AST	Gateway	IBM	Midwest Micro	Packard Bell
AST Advantage P100	P5-100	Aptiva M50	Elite	Legend 814CD
S MB of RAM				
313	283	324	248	330
157	165	238	163	171
147	71	104	65	107
16 MB of RAM				
303	265	304	238	300
106	129	126	110	123
131	63	91	59	89



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### Meet December's testers

(Top row, left to right)

Barbara Dowd, 47, works in financial services. She has almost 20 years of experience with computers; she uses a PC at home and at work, and relished the opportunity to give the computers in the Consumer Lab a workout before she plunks down money for a new system.

Anthony Carvalho, 19, is a student. He uses a Macintosh at school and works on an old 286-based PC at home. Anthony, who considers his computing skills to be average, said he'd spend up to \$2,000 for a new PC.

**Steve Fong,** 33, is a computerstore salesman; he's been using both PCs and Macs at work for eight years.

**Trent Schneider**, 30, is a research administrator for a university. He uses PCs at work and at home, and rates his computer experience as above-average.

(Middle row, left to right)

**Lisa A. Freeman**, 24, is an office manager for a film production company. She's used a PC at her job for about five years, but she doesn't own a home computer.

**Richard Mottl,** 32, is an accountant who uses his Macintosh at home primarily to manage his finances. He rates his computer experience as average.

**Chris DiNapoli**, 50, is a puzzle editor and freelance graphics artist. On the job, she uses a Macintosh; at home, she uses a 486-based PC.

**Kenneth Drucker,** 47, owns an apparel manufacturing company. He uses PCs at home and at work. "I like trying out new equipment, so this is my fantasy," he said of his lab-testing experience.

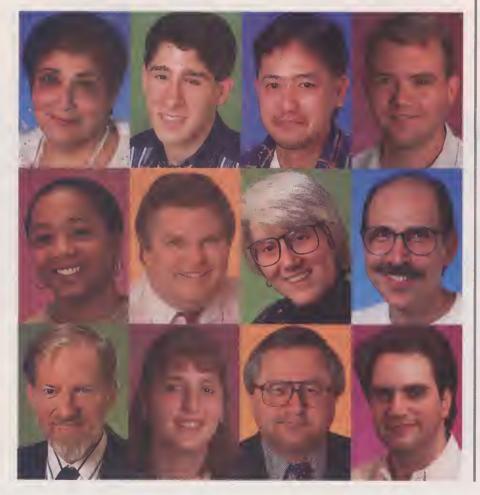
(Bottom row, left to right)

John White, 59, teaches computing at a community college. John uses a Mac at home and at work, but he was impressed by the Hewlett-Packard PC he tested: "This is a powerhouse," he said.

**Tiffany Hanulec**, 19, is a student who has been using computers since she was 7. She uses a 486-based PC, mostly to complete school assignments, surf the Internet and play games.

Joseph DelBroccolo, 50, is an art supervisor for a mail-order company. He uses a Macintosh at home and at work. But after testing, he said he might consider buying a PC.

**Bertrand C. Emmett,** 31, is a chiropractor. He rates his computer ex-(tester bios continue on page 278)



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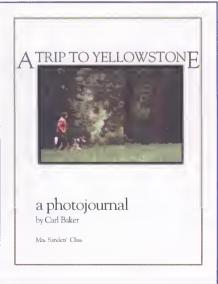
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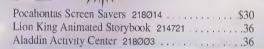
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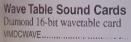
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perience as average, and he's looking forward to buying a new system for his office.

(Top row, left to right)

Vicky Moy, 24, is a field engineer for a technology company. She

uses a PC at work, and considers her computer experience to be average.

James LaClair, 36, is a signal inspector for a railroad company. He uses PCs both at home and at work, and says he understands how new users could be nervous about buying a PC.

**Kimberly Zimmer**, 25, is a waterquality examiner. She rates her computer skills as average.

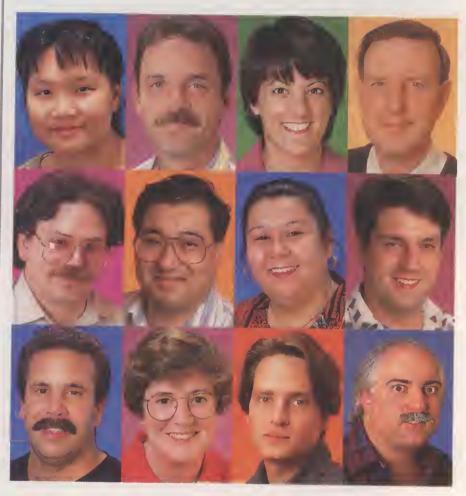
James Ostazewski, 43, is a computer specialist with the Federal Aviation Authority. He uses PCs both at work and at home. He said that a week of using the test PCs at home gave him a good sense of their strengths and weaknesses.

(Middle row, left to right)

Jake Richter, 31, is an information-technology director for a communications company. He uses

PCs both at work and at home, and considers his computing experience to be above-average.

Homer Sun, 33, is a computer engineer who uses a Mac both at home and at work. "I need to make a big decision: Do I buy a PC, or get a new Mac? I think I need both," he told us after testing.



**Christine Fong,** 27, is a receptionist who has been using computers for 11 years. She has a Macintosh at home.

**David Hanulec,** 25, is a real-estate salesman who uses PCs both at work and at home; his current home computer is a high-powered 90-MHz Pentium PC.

(Bottom row, left to right)

Jim Gonzalez, 29, is an auto technician. He uses a 486-based PC at home. Instead of buying a new system right now, he plans to upgrade his computer within the next six months.

for a local television station in New York. She doesn't have a computer at home, but she uses a PC at work; she considers her computer skills to be above-average.

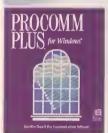
**Douglas Going,** 28, is a freelance video producer who uses a Macintosh in his work. After testing a variety of PCs for our reviews, he remains a loyal Macintosh fan.

**James Sarrantonio,** 38, is an actuary. James rates his computer skills as above-average.

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#### Inside your new PC a tour under the hood

Ever wonder what makes a typical desktop PC tick? Take our guided tour of a computer's major internal components and some of the features to consider when you shop. A tower (vertical) PC's layout differs from that of the desktop version pictured here, but the components and capabilities remain the same.

Whatever kind of computer you buy, it's always a good idea to look inside first to make sure that one of its wost important components, the motherboard, is well organized. Make sure no connectors or cables interfere with add-in cards plugged into expansion slots, and that there are no memory slots hidden under components such as disk drives. Also, check to be sure add-in cards aren't installed too close to the top of the CPU (central processing unit), as that can cause the cards to absorb excess heat and wear out prematurely:

#### CPU (central processing unit)

The CPU, or processor, is your computer's brain. The majority of new home PCs run on Pentium CPUs at speeds ranging from 75 MHz to 133 MHz. For most users, a 90-MHz Pentium system is a good choice. Advanced CPUs generate a lot of heat, so a fan, or a radiator called a "heat sink," often will be attached to the top of the CPU.

#### 2 Motherboard

The motherboard is your computer's main system board; it links all internal components with each other. Some new computers have certain devices—for example, hard- and floppy-disk controllers, or graphics chips—built right onto the motherboard.

#### **3** Graphics card

The graphics card translates digital instructions into screen images. Ideally, your new PC will have a 64-bit accelerated graphics card for zippier performance. Built-in 3-D animation acceleration will make the most of animated games, while MPEG (Motion Pictures Experts Group) hardware support smooths video playback in MPEG-encoded CD-ROMs. (Some companies choose to provide a separate card for MPEG hardware support, while others support MPEG through software.)

#### PCI (Peripheral Component Interconnect) local bus slots

The 32-bit PCI local bus enables direct communication between your computer's CPU and add-in cards designed to be installed in PCI local bus slots—typically

graphics cards and disk-drive controllers. It provides much faster performance than the older ISA bus; be sure a new computer has at least two free PCI local bus slots.

#### 5 Sound card

Whether you want to compose music on your PC or simply listen to your favorite CD-ROM game's soundtrack, you'll need a sound card. Look for a PC that contains at least a 16-bit sound card, preferably with a wavetable synthesizer chip onboard. (Sometimes, a single card integrates sound, fax/modem and telephony capabilities.) Other key features include support for 3-D sound and a joystick port.

#### 6 Fax/modem

A fax/modem connects your computer to other computers or fax machines over telephone lines. You can use it to connect to on-line services, and even to receive faxes directly on your hard drive. The modem ideally will communicate at speeds of 28.8 Kbps (kilobits per second), or, at minimum, 14.4 Kbps. Be sure the fax/modem and included software support telephony capabilities, which will enable your PC to take voicemail messages and more.

#### ISA (Industry Standard Architecture) bus slots

The ISA bus is a 16-bit data "highway" that the computer's CPU uses to communicate with most types of add-in cards (sound cards, internal modems and so on). Most PC cards fit in ISA bus slots; be sure your new computer has at least two of these slots free to accommodate devices you

may decide to add to your system later.

#### 8 Hard drive

Your computer stores programs and data not currently in use on the hard drive. Be sure your computer has at least 850 megabytes (MB) of storage, or, better yet, 1 gigabyte (GB). Both EIDE (Enhanced Integrated Drive Electronics) and SCSI (Small Computer Systems Interface) drives deliver excellent performance, but drives that conform to the SCSI specification typically cost more.

#### Power supply

Every computer has an internal power supply that converts the wall outlet's 115-volt alternating current to the computer's 5-volt direct current. The power supply should have at least one spare connector to accommodate an additional drive.

#### 10 Floppy disk drive

Most new PCs include a single, 3.5-inch floppy drive. If your old computer had only a 5.25-inch floppy drive, you may want to add a 5.25-inch drive—they cost as little as \$30—to your new PC to make it easy to transfer data from your old computer to your new one.

#### 11 CD-ROM drive

To play CD-ROM software, you need a CD-ROM drive for your PC. Today's multimedia computers typically are sold with quad-speed (4X) drives, which means they transfer data at 600 Kbps, or four times as fast as the original, single-speed CD-ROM drives.

#### 12 Drive bays

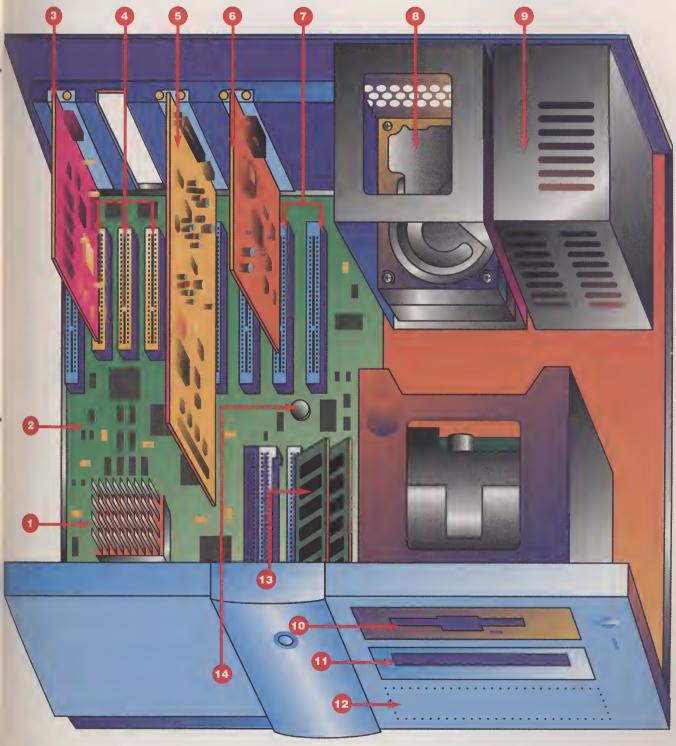
On many new computers, you'll find the hard drive mounted in the back, near the power supply. This leaves at least one drive bay at the front free for easy installation of devices such as tape-backup drives. A new PC should have at least two half-height (1%-inch) drive bays available to let you add additional hard drives and other peripherals.

#### 13 RAM (random access memory)

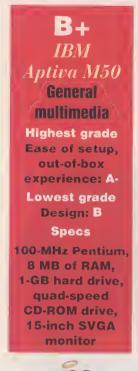
The computer holds all the programs you are currently running, as well as the data with which you're working, in its RAM. Consider 8 MB the minimum you need; 16 MB is better. For future upgrades, make sure the motherboard has at least four SIMM (single in-line memory module) slots.

#### 14 Battery

The battery keeps sending power to your PC's internal clock when you've switched off the computer's main power source. You can expect it to last for several years, but it probably will need to be replaced at some point, so look inside before you buy a system to make sure it is both accessible and easy to remove.



#### • IBM Aptiva M50





Drive door

seems flimsy

Looking for a reliable home computer with something for the whole family?

Our testers might recommend the IBM Aptiva M50, which tied for first place with the Packard Bell Legend 814CD.

The Aptiva M50 topped their scorecards for overall quality (B+), thanks in part to strong features such as the fastest fax/modem among the PCs we tested (28.8-Kbps): 3-D sound and 30-watt speakers, which put the unit near the top in sound quality: and its unique telephone answering system, which restarts the PC if a call comes in after you've turned the power off, takes the message, then shuts down again. Our testers also gave very high marks to the software titles IBM includes with the system (A-).

In our speed tests (see page 268), the Aptiva M50's performance generally fell in the middle of the pack. We had to use an off-the-shelf Windows 95 upgrade rather than IBM's optimized version (which at press time was expected to be installed in the Aptivas on store shelves by December). The PC's performance could improve with a version tailored to include IBM system drivers.

The only thing the Aptiva

M50 testers slammed was the door panel over the CD-ROM and floppy drives; they considered it flimsy, accounting in part for the PC's lowest grade, for design. Otherwise, they said, the M50 is an A-1 selection.



#### Packard Bell Legend \$14CD



For the second year in a row, a team of consumer judges sent a Packard Bell PC to the winner's circle. The Legend 814CD (also called the Multimedia Pentium P100) shares our Tester's Choice label with the IBM Aptiva M50.

The Legend 814CD had our testers' favorite documentation (A) and design (A-). Although some complained that the cabinet and keyboard didn't feel solid,

> they loved the color-coded plugs for the mouse and monitor. And while the Legend 814CD's sound-quality rating (B) was among the lowest the testers handed out, they liked the space-saving, monitormounted speakers.

> Testers perceptions of the 100-MHz system's performance earned it a top-flight grade of A, despite our lab tests having found the Legend 814CD's speed to be un-

exceptional.

All the testers liked the included software, starting with the Navigator program, a tour that shows newcomers how to work with the PC. "It was a good selection of family softwarc," said Kenneth Drucker. "There was lots of kids' stuff, a crossword puzzle, an Internet browser and a cooking program Hiked."

The Legend 814CD also adds to users' overall convenience by including a TV-like remote-control device that lets you control sound or even presentations from afar.

Packard Bell may have won our Lab tests for two consecutive years, but it's computer buyers who will get the grand prize—a solid PC for their money.





**BAD NEWS**  Second-rate keyboard

EBest Star Trek Game Ever Golden Triad Amard Winner Multinedia Morto Computer Game Review



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CIRCLE REAGER SERVICE NUMBER 146

#### • HP Pavilion P75

If first impressions really do count, consumers have much to look forward to from Hewlett-Packard. Our testers rated the HP Pavilion P75—one of the first in the company's new home computer line—just a few points behind the co-winners, the IBM Aptiva M50 and



B+HP Pavilion P75 General multimedia **Highest grade** Out-of-box experience: 🛕 Lowest grade **Documentation:** Specs 75-MHz Pentium, 8 MB of RAM. 850-MB hard drive. quad-speed CD-ROM drive, 14-inch SVGA monitor



#### **GOOD NEWS**

- Sleek design
- Color-coded cables



#### **BAD NEWS**

Skimpy documentation

Packard Bell Legend 814CD.

Our testers thought the Pavilion P75's sleek, rounded look would fit right in with their home decor; its B+ for design trailed only the Legend 814CD. The unit led the pack in both overall value (A-) and out-of-box experience (A). And like the Packard Bell machine, the Pavilion P75 has color-coded cables to guide you when plugging in devices.

HP also includes an exclusive software interface called "Personal Page," which lets each user set up his or her own "view" of the PC and use that to get around. "This is a slick setup," said Jake Richter. The testers also were pleased with the system's selection of family-oriented software.

Though testers had no quibbles with performance, our lab tests found this 75-MHz PC near the bottom; but that's not too surprising, since faster processors run most of the other systems in our group.

John White, a computing professor who had purchased a PC prior to our tests, only regretted he didn't have time to get to know the Pavilion P75 even better: "This is a phenomenal bargain; I wish I had bought it."

#### • Gateway P5-100

B+ Gateway P5-100 General multimedia Highest grade Ease of setup: A Lowest grade Overall quality: 🖪 Specs 100-MHz Pentium, 8 MB of RAM. 730-MB hard drive, quad-speed CD-ROM drive. 15-inch SVGA monitor



#### **GOOD NEWS**

- Great sound
- Easy to set up



#### **BAD NEWS**

- Little entertainment software
- Documentation is poorly organized

The Cateway P5-100's overall grade of B+ put it just below the top three general multimedia machines. While it has several technical virtues, testers had some problems with two big issues for home users: documentation and software selection.

Our testers tapped the P5-100 as the easiest PC to set up (A), and the system with the best sound quality (A-). It did very well in performance tests in our lab, too, registering as one of the fastest contenders.

But after the straightforward setup, testers had to struggle a bit to learn about the machine's features and figure out how to use them; they particularly disliked having to flip around in separate manuals to familiarize themselves with the system's various parts. Although they liked the quality of the documentation (B+), they felt it would be more helpful in a single, cross-referenced volume.

Testers also found the entertainment-software selection lacking. "I thought it would have more games and stuff," said James LaClair. And they turned up their noses at Bob, Microsoft's "social interface," which uses a cartoon-like home metaphor to navigate you around the PC.

"The Gateway PC is a great value," Vicky Moy said, "but the company should remember that software is important, too."





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#### • Macintosh Performa 5215CD

Macintosh **Performa** 5215CD General multimedia **Highest grade** Ease of setup. monitor quality: A Lowest grade Sound quality: C+ Specs 75-MHz PowerPC. 8 MB of RAM. 1-GB hard drive. quad-speed CD-ROM drive, 15-inch, 832-by-624 monitor



#### **GOOD NEWS**

 Easy to set up
 Operating system is a breeze to use



#### **BAD NEWS**

- Difficult to upgrade
- Poor sound

Coming in fourth of nine general multimedia computers tested wasn't a bad showing for the Performa 5215CD, but it's a bit of a slip for the Macintosh line from last year, when the Performa 578 finished in second place.

The Performa 5215CD had generally respectable grades, and tied with the Epson Action Tower 8200MM for the top grade in monitor quality (A). But its low scores for sound quality (C+) and performance (B-) hurt its overall grade considerably.

The Performa is an all-inone machine, which means the
monitor, speakers and cabinet
are combined. This design can
be a double-edged sword: The
system is extremely easy to put
together, but it's either difficult or impossible to upgrade
individual components. "The
fact that the screen is attached
to the computer bothers me a
lot," said Joseph DelBroccolo.
"I love Macs, but not this particular model."

Testers liked using the Macintosh operating system, System 7.5. (A separate panel that judged operating systems in *HomePC*'s November issue picked System 7.5 second to top-scoring Windows 95 in their tests.) Even though several people said they didn't like this particular model, many told us that System 7.5 alone would make a different Macintosh model a welcome addition to their homes.



#### • Compaq Presario 7170

Compaq has sold a lot of Presarios to PC shoppers in the two years since the line hit the streets. Our testers were neither swept off their feet nor overly disappointed by the new Presario 7170; they gave it solid B's in nearly every category—it just didn't stand out in any particular area.

For starters, testers didn't care much for the Pre-







 Presario Plaza interface makes system easy to use
 High reliability

ingir renabili

BAD NEWS

• Small monitor

sario 7170's 14-inch monitor, which was too small for their comfort; it received its lowest grade for monitor quality. And while its B score for sound quality was higher than that of some of its rivals, testers told us that the speakers did not sound as good as they would have hoped.

System performance was only fair to middling: Testers gave the machine a B (and one of the lowest point totals) in that category. Our speed tests in the lab confirmed that this 90-MHz computer typically fell among the slower PCs. Another 90-MHz machine, the Quantex P5/90, ran faster.

On the plus side, Compaq consistently shows it understands its customers' needs; for example, it provides Presario Plaza, an interface that gives users an alternative way to work with their computer; that feature won big rayes from our testers.

They also liked the Presario 7170's included software. "I would buy this system." said Kim Zimmer. "It's a nice size, and it has a well-rounded software selection. It seems like a good deal."

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TIME WARNER

CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 164

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#### Epson Action Tower 8200MM | • Midwest Micro Elite



The overall grade points racked up by the Epson Action Tower 8200MM placed it sixth in the field of nine general multimedia computers our testers compared. Its overall B rating follows close on the heels of the

Presario 7170; with the only 17-inch display in the group, it's no surprise the Epson took one of the top grades (an A, tying with the Pcrforma 5215CD) for monitor quality.

Testers had a generally favorable impression of the Action Tower 8200MM's performance (B+). In our speed tests, it performed comparably to the 75-MHz general multimedia system from Hcwlett-Packard. But the PC took a hit on support issues: Its limited documentation scored poorly (B), and although we didn't grade the category, testers complained about hotline support. "I tried calling. but it was impossible to get through," said Vicky Moy.

By and large, testers liked the included software. The system scored a relatively low B, however, due to one tester's very harsh grade, which brought the average down.

Our testers appreciated the tower's roomy interior, which holds seven drive bays for additional devices, but several disliked the toll that takes on the system's overall look. "I don't like the tower conccpt.... lt's cumbersome," said Joseph DelBroccolo, In terms of home decor, the Epson just didn't stand tall.





#### **GOOD NEWS**

- · Large, easy-toview monitor
- Easy to expand



#### **BAD NEWS**

 Clunky tower design

Midwest Micro Elite General multimedia Highest grade Ease of setup: B+ Lowest grade Design: 📴 Specs 100-MHz Pentium, 8 MB of RAM, 1-GB hard drive, quad-speed CD-ROM drive. 15-inch SVGA monitor



#### **GOOD NEWS**

- · Solid, reliable machine
  - Easy to expand



#### **BAD NEWS**

- High price Skimpy
- documentation

While the Midwest Micro Elite's overall B grade is certainly nothing to sneeze at. the 100-MHz system fell closer to the bottom of the general multimedia computer group than the top for our testers—despite its blazing performance.

The Elite finished in first place in nearly all our lab tests for performance, vet it took no top grades in any category our testers rated. Still, the group had some good things to say about the machine. They found it reliable and powerful, and they applauded the five available drive bays for addin components like an additional hard drive or a tapebackup device.

"Overall, this is a solid computer," summed up Trent Schneider.

What bothered testers most was the system's dearth of documentation; the Elite shared the lowest grade in that category (B-) with the Quantex P5/90.

And although the testers gave the Elite a B+ for its software selection, overall they found the titles generally more appropriate for business users than for the general consumer.

Finally, while other computer models in our tests

carried higher list prices, several of the testers felt they simply didn't see enough "special touches" to justify paying \$2,349 for the Elite.



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#### • Quantex P5/90

**Ouantex** P5/90 General multimedia **Highest grade** Ease of setup: B+ Lowest grade Design: C+ Specs 90-MHz Pentium, 16 MB of RAM. 850-MB hard drive. quad-speed CD-ROM drive, 15-inch SVGA monitor



#### **GOOD NEWS**

- Powerful and fast
- Easy to expand



#### **BAD NEWS**

- Limited software selection
  - Big chassis

Our testers found the Quantex P5/90 oversized and unattractive; in their eyes, it had very little to distinguish itself from the competition—at least in a positive sense. "This had the widest tower—humongous—that I have ever seen," said Tiffany Hanulec.

But even though it finished last in the general multimedia category, the system had some strong points. Although testers complained about the size, it makes the unit extremely expandable—the P5/90 has a cavernous capacity of 11 drive bays for hard drives, CD-ROM drives or tape-backup devices. It also scored extremely well in our speed tests.

The Quantex PC earned its highest grade for ease of setup (B+), but all the other systems we tested scored better. It also finished last in out-of-box experience (B), and its documentation grade (B-) tied for last place with the Midwest Micro Elite. Many testers complained that the system simply didn't provide enough information to help them get it up and running quickly.

The testers were also quite unimpressed with the software selection, again the lowest in the category (B-).

Despite the computer's last-place rating and the fail-

ings our testers cited, they decided the P5/90 is a full-function PC that would meet their family's needs; they just seemed to think there were many other systems that would do a lot better.



#### • AT&T Globalyst-363



AT&T

Globalyst-363
Home-office
computer
Highest grade
Out-of-box
experience: A
Lowest grade
Overall value: BSpecs
75-MHz Pentium,
8 MB of RAM

8 MB of RAM, 1-GB hard drive, quad-speed CD-ROM drive, 15-inch SVGA monitor



#### **GOOD NEWS**

- Powerful featuresEasy to set up
  - and use



#### **BAD NEWS**

• AT&T has stopped making PCs

The AT&T Clobalyst-363 is going out in a blaze of glory: It took the top grade

in the home-office category—and then became a casualty of the second breakup of AT&T. In September, the company amounced that it's getting out of the computer business.

For some, that will be reason enough not to buy this excellent machine, but others will see a chance to get a fine PC at what is sure to become a bargain price. (AT&T will stop shipping PCs on Dec. 22, but you should be able to find the unit on store shelves into the new year.)

One obvious hedge about choosing this PC is concern over getting technical support in the future. AT&T has pledged to continue its lifetime support policy for the system.

If you decide to make what might be considered a risky purchase, let it be some consolation that this system got higher home-office grades in most categories than the AST Advantage P100. While far from a muscle machine, in most tests it matched or came close to the performance of other 75-MHz PCs.

"It's a very professionallooking computer, and it ran

nicely, too, said Richard Mottl. If you're a risk-taker, then you'll probably like the Globalyst-363; if you can get the support you need, you may be laughing all the way to the bank when the fire sale begins.



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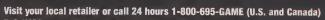


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#### **GOOD NEWS**

 Easy-to-use interface



#### **BAD NEWS**

- · Internal components are poorly organized
- Flimsy keyboard and mouse

While the AST Advantage P100's overall grade lagged slightly behind that of the AT&T Globalyst-363, it beat out the AT&T unit on its software selection  $(\Lambda$ -) and its overall value (B).

It didn't do as well in the design (B) and overall quality (B+) ratings. Testers were concerned about wires inside the PC that were either entangled or stretched across other components in a seemingly haphazard way. That can be an accident waiting to happen—a cable that's not carefully pinned down or tucked out of the way could get damaged. In addition, "the keyboard and mouse had this very light, flimsy feel," said Bertrand Emmett. "The AT&T machines seemed to be of an overall better quality."

This 100-MHz model was an adequate performer, yet its speed in our lab tests actually failed to measure up to computers such as the Quantex P5/90, despite the latter's slower processor.

Even so, many testers liked the Advantage P100. "It seemed friendly to use," said James Sarrantonio. The unit includes AST Works II, a desktop navigator that makes it easy to use.

Overall, our testers found the system to be not too far out of the AT&T Globalyst-

363's league; if AT&T's imminent departure from the computer business worries you, the Advantage P100 would be a solid—and possibly safer—choice for a home-office PC. •





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# Picking the right computer: what's inside six leading models for the home and home office

Note: Configurations and price	7766		Extras	Technical support	Warranty	No. of software programs included	No. of free SIMM sockets	No. of free ISA/PCI expansion slots	No. of ISA/PCI expansion slots	Speakers	Telephony	Sound capabilities	Fax/data modem	MONITOR	MPEG support	Graphics adapter	CD-ROM drive	No. of free drive bays	No. of total drive bays	Floppy drives	Hard drive capacity	Memory	Processor	Manufacturer and model name
Note: Configurations and prices were accurate at press time, but are subject to change at the manufacturer's discretion.	\$2,788	2002	Microphone	Yes, 24 hours	3 years limited	12	2	2 ISA/2 PCI	3 ISA/2 PCI	30 watts per channel	Yes	16-bit, wavetable synthesis, 3D sound	28.8-Kbps	15-inch SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	Yes, software	Super VGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	Quad-speed (4X)		\$ 4	1 3.5-inch	1 GB	8 MB	Intel 100-MHz Pentium	IBM Aptiva M50
, but are subject to change at I	\$2,699 (est. street price)		Microphone, remote control	Yes, 24 hours	1 year on-site	34	N	2 ISA/2 PCI	3 ISA/2 PCI	10 watts per channel (with adapter)	Yes	16-bit, FM synthesis, 3D sound	14.4-Kbps	15-inch SVGA, 1,024-by- 768-pixel resolution	Yes, software	SVGA, 1,024-by- 768-pixel resolution	Quad-speed		4	1 3.5-inch	1.2 GB	8 MB	Intel 100-MHz Pentium	Packard Bell Legend 814CD
the manufacturer's discretion.	\$2,365		Microphone	Yes, 24 hours	1 year on-site	22	4	4 ISA/3 PCI	5 ISA/3 PCI	Information not available	Yes	16-bit, wavetable synthesis	14.4-Kbps	15-inch SVGA, 1,024-by- 768-pixel resolution	No	SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	Quad-speed	ω	6	1 3.5-inch	1 GB	8 MB	Intel 75-MHz Pentium	AT&T AT&T Globalyst-363
	\$2,200	viicropriorie	Microphopo	Yes, 24 hours	1 year on-site	26	N	2 ISA/2 PCI	3 ISA/2 PCI	5 watts per channel	Yes	16-bit, FM synthesis	14.4-Kbps	14-inch SVGA, 1,024-by- 768-pixel resolution	No	SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	Quad-speed		4	1 3.5-inch	850 MB	8 MB	Intel 75-MHz Pentium	Hewlett-Packard HP Pavilion P75
	\$2,524	None		Yes 24 hours	1 year on-site, 3 years limited	18	2	1 ISA/3 PCI	3 ISA/4 PCI	4.5 watts per channel	No	16-bit, wavetable synthesis	14.4-Kbps	15-inch SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	No	SVGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution	Quad-speed	4	7	1 3.5-inch	730 MB	8 MB	Intel 100-MHz Pentium	Gateway P5-100
	\$2,300 (est. street price)	Microphone, TV hookup	100, 14 10010		1 year on-site 1 year limited	26	-4	1 PDS	1 PDS (Processor Direct Slot)	Information not available	Yes	16-bit, FM synthesis	14.4-Kbps	15-inch, 832-by-624-pixel resolution	Yes, hardware	832-by-624-pixel resolution	Quad-speed	0	ω .	1 3.5-inch	1 GB	8 MB	PowerPC 75-MHz RISC	Apple Computer Macintosh Performa 5215 CD

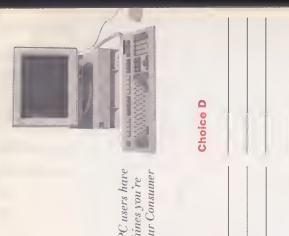
ie, but are subject to change at the manufacturer's discretion.

# HOMEPC Take

# ✓ Take us shopping with you!

Picking the right computer: the HomePC tear-out guide and checklist

Confused by the various built-in features, add-on options and prices of the many computer systems you see when you shop? Even experienced PC users have considering as 3 ou shop. We're also included for comparison our recommendations for a top-notch system, with a setup that exceeds many in our Consumer trouble keeping track of what one model offers compared with another. To help, bring along this guide and fill in the specifications for the machines you're Lab tests; you'll need to decide which of these features are most in line with your needs and your budget.



•	3	,	5		
	HomePC recommends	Choice A	Choice B	Choice C	Choice D
	90-MHz Pentium or 75-MHz PowerPC				
	16 MB				
	850 MB to 1 GB				
	One 3.5-inch				
	2				
	2				
	Quad-speed (4X)				Ì
	Super VGA, 1,280-by- 1,024-pixel resolution				
	Yes, software or hardware				1
	15-inch SVGA, 1,024-by- 768-pixel resolution				
	28.8-Kbps				
	16-bit, wavetable synthesis				
	Yes				
	10 watts per channel				
ste	5 ISA/3 PCI				
ots	2 ISA/2 PCI		and the second s		
_	0				
cluded	10				
	1 year on-site				
	Yes, 24 hours				
	Joystick, microphone				
	\$2,500 to \$2,700				

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Graphics adapter

**CD-ROM drive** 

MPEG support

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Manufacturer Model name

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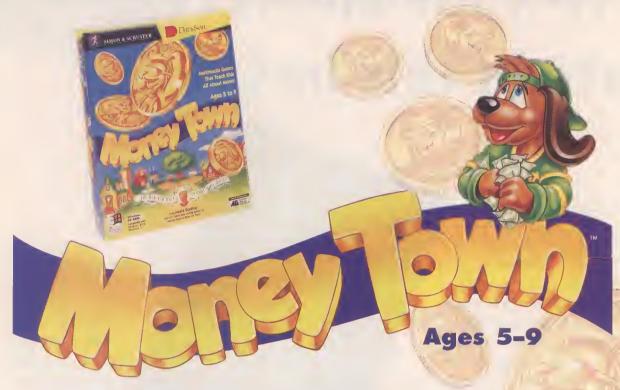


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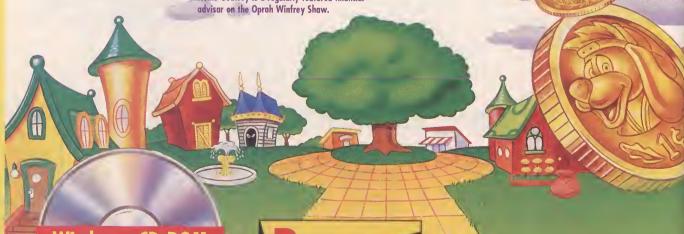




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do-it-yourself

# nuts + bolts STEP-BY-STEP

#### Just duet: making music with your PC



MIDI keyboards are packaged with a cable that has either one or two circular connectors at one end, and a rectangular, 15-pin connector at the other. Plug the rectangular end into the joystick/MIDI port on your sound card at the back of your PC. (It's easy to recognize; it's the only port that can accommodate 15 pins.)

You may already think of your home computer as an entertainment center, but did you know that with a little finetuning, you can use it to write, play and record music?

Whether you want to get funky or practice your Chopin, an audio-editing software program and a musical keyboard that supports the Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI) standard are all you need to turn your PC into a recording studio.

A MIDI keyboard doesn't send out audio signals the way, say, a guitar plugged into an amplifier does; vather, it produces computer code, which the audio-editing software translates into sounds you can hear through your computer's speakers or "loop" to the MIDI device for playback.

To perform this upgrade, you'll need Windows 3.1 or Windows 95 and an audio-editing program—anything from the basic one many manufacturers preinstall on home computers to versatile dedicated packages, such as Cakewalk Home Studio, which may cost \$100 or more.

The way you'll record and edit your sound files will depend on the software you choose, but if you follow the steps beginning at the left, you won't need a voadie—everything should be set up within an hour, and you'll be calm, cool and composing.

#### Before you begin, be sure...

- Your PC is equipped with audioediting software.
- Your PC has a sound card with a 15-pin joystick/MDI port.
- Your keyboard is a MIDI device.



2 If you want to play games as well as music at your PC without switching cables constantly, check to see if your MIDI cable has a separate plug you can use to attach a joystick (see above). If you don't see a separate joystick connector, you can buy an adapter/cable combo for less than \$20.



3 Plug the circular end of the MIDI cable into your musical keyboard. If the cable has two circular connectors, push the one marked Out into the In port on your MIDI keyboard, and plug the connector labeled In into the port marked Out. This creates a "loop" between your computer and the MIDI device, so you can generate or play back sounds from either device.



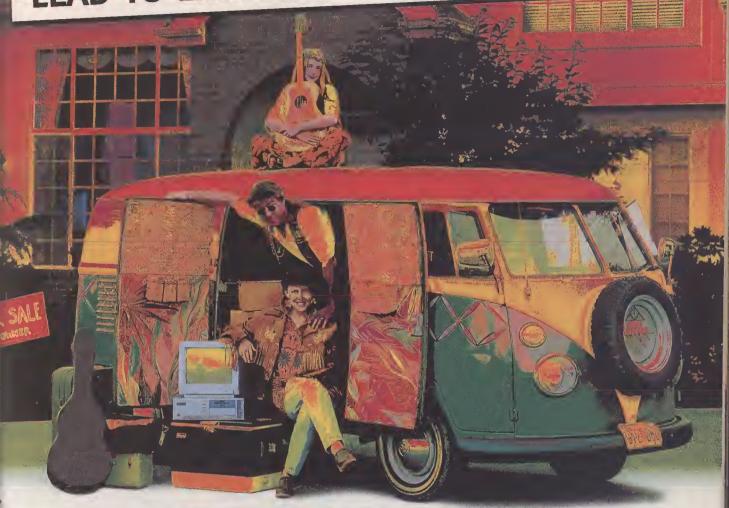
4 Plug one end of your keyboard's AC power adapter into the keyboard, then plug the other end into a surge suppressor.





5 Start your computer, launch Windows 3.1 or Windows 95, and open the Control Panel. If you're using Windows 3.1, double-click on the MIDI Mapper icon (see the upper screen above). In Windows 95, click on the Multimedia icon (see the lower screen), then click the MIDI tab.

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In either Windows 3.1 or Windows 95, you'll see a window that tells your sound card how to process the audio signals you play. (The top screen above shows Windows 3.1; the bottom screen is from Windows 95.)

In general, selecting a MIDI device means the music you play will be heard through the keyboard, while selecting an FM device (your sound card) means you'll hear the audio through your computer's speakers. Some sound cards let you hear MIDI and FM devices simultaneously. The specific setting you need depends on your sound card; consult the card's documentation for instructions.

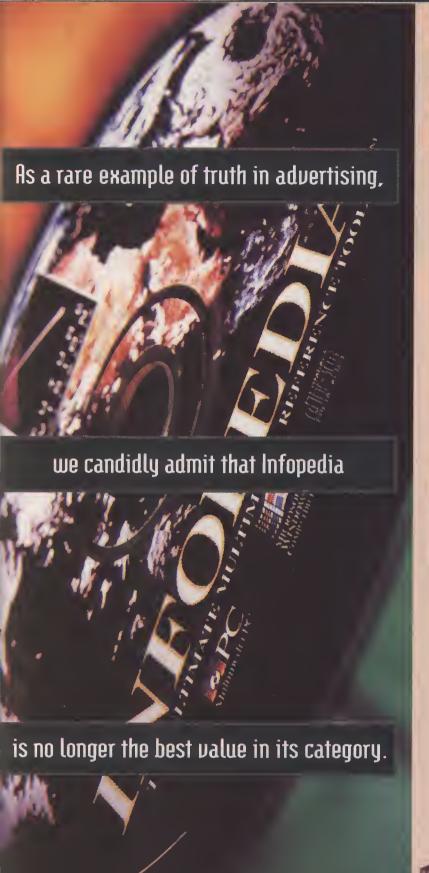
Once you've made your selection, save your settings and exit the Control Panel. If you've changed any settings, restart Windows.

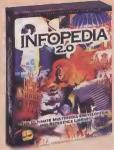


Launch your audio-editing software (we used Cakewalk Home Studio). If it has its own mapping scheme (which stipulates how sounds will be processed and played back), check the documentation to make sure you pick the right settings. If it doesn't have a mapping scheme, the information you provided in Step 6 will be sufficient.



3 Switch on your MIDI keyboard's power. Some MIDI devices can process MIDI signals "locally" (without going through a PC). If yours does, make sure this feature is turned off. (Check your MIDI keyboard's documentation for instructions.) Your computer is now set up to process MIDI signals; when your PC's power is turned off, you won't hear any sounds from the keyboard.





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Your hookups are now complete. If you don't hear any sound when you play the keyboard, make sure that both your MIDI keyboard and computer speakers are turned on.



Most Windows sound-editing software allows you to record any music you play. Open the File pulldown menu in your audio-editing program, then click on New to open a new audio file. Follow your program's instructions, and your PC will be instrumental in shaping your future musical projects.



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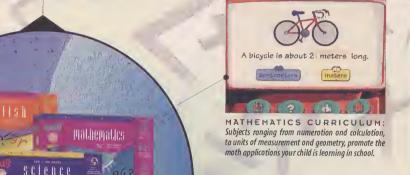
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# financial adviser

TAKING CARE OF HOUSEHOLD BUSINESS

After spending the day teaching high-school students how to prove theorems and ealculate cosines, 46-year-old New York City math teacher Jeff Shermack heads off to

working on his 1995 return; once he has a rough idea of what he'll owe for the whole year, he opens TurboTax Head Start's estimatedtax worksheet to experiment with estimated payment amounts. His goal is to pay as little as possible in January without incurring a penalty later. This way, he can leave

Tax and TurboTax (called MacIn-Tax in its Macintosh version)—are released each fall; they can help almost anyone assess his or her federal tax liabilities or ferret out endof-year deductions that will help keep Uncle Sam from digging quite so deep in the wallet.

The early editions incorporate

all the tax forms you would likely need, and they handle all

the calculations for you after you input your data. Just like the final versions, they can generate a tax return based on your answers to in-

## Tax planning: give Uncle Sam a run for your money

his second job. As a self-employed travel agent, Shermack works to find his clients the best bargains on flights and hotel reservations. The extra income is welcome, but there's one thing that complicates the equation: taxes.

"The big question for me," Shermaek says, "is how I handle my end-of-the-year estimated tax payment." Four times a year, Shermack sends the IRS a payment for his extracurricular earnings. The final installment for 1995 is due in January 1996—and that's the last opportunity he has to square his income status with Uncle Sam for the year. If his estimates of his total tax don't wind up within 10 percent of the real payment due on April 15, the IRS could hit him with a penalty.

Even with his math background, Shermaek doesn't take any chances with these figures: He uses Turbo-Tax Head Start edition, the "early-bird" version of the popular tax-preparation program, which, like the three other top-selling tax-prep packages, doesn't ship in its final form until sometime after New Year's Day. Using the early-bird program, Shermack can begin

more money in the bank—where it'll continue earning interest until April, when the more significant part of his tax bill comes due.



People who report earnings from part-time ventures, or who run full-time businesses and pay estimated taxes, aren't the only ones who can take advantage of early-bird tax programs to prepare for that dreaded April day. Early-bird versions of all the popular tax-calculation packages—Kiplinger Tax-Cut, Personal Tax Edge, Simply

terview questions about everything from your dependents to your capital gains for the year. (If you have a sufficient level of tax expertise, you may choose to skip the Q&A and work within the forms directly.)

The early-bird editions use preliminary 1995 tax rates and can print only preliminary returns, which aren't accepted by the IRS. Tax-software publishers must wait until Dec. 31 to finalize their programs, in order to avoid missing any last-minute changes to the tax code.

For many individual taxpayers, the main advantage of calculating returns using early-bird tax software is time: Apart from getting your return more or less in order so you don't have to scramble in the spring, it makes a world of difference to your financial strategy if you know in October that you're facing a whopping tax bill in April.

An early-bird return can help determine if there's any action you may be able to take before year's end to qualify for deductions. For instance, if you've paid big medical bills this year, feeding your data into the programs' medical-deduc-

package closer to tax time. And once you've entered information into the TaxCut Planning Edition, you'll be able to import it easily, along with all your other data, into the final version of TaxCut; in fact, all the final editions of the tax programs read entries from their planahead counterparts.

The early-bird editions also feature "What If...?" analyses, which let you easily compare the return you create using your existing data with the same return after the adjustment you're considering. For example, many mutual-stock funds did very well this year, and perhaps you're considering selling off some investments to pay for a

To Control of the Con

Early-bird tax programs are keen on 'deductive' reasoning.

cashing in those funds in '95 after seeing the difference. Since longterm capital gains are taxed at a lower rate than short-term gains, holding on to your investments for

# Tax programs include 'What If' analyses, which let you see just how a financial strategy you're considering will affect your return.

tion worksheets will let you see if your health care payments approach 7.5 percent of your income; if so, it may be worth going for any necessary treatment before January, because expenses above this percentage are deductible.

Another option is to total up the miscellaneous expenses you've entered in the software's Schedule A form; spending a little more in December on professional dues, education or job-hunting fees may qualify you for a tax allowance—you can deduct any such expenses that exceed 2 percent of your income.

Early-bird software may also tip you off about strategies that could mean more to you now than if you hear about them in the final versions next year.

For example, as you complete a tax form in TaxCut, you can click on the Info button for quick advice that helps ensure you claim all the deductions to which you're entitled. While filling out your Schedule A in the early-bird software, for instance, you may learn that you can take deductions in conjunction with your charity work, including the cost of driving to your organization's holiday benefit. You're probably more likely to record such claims while the event is still fresh in your mind than if you wait to use the final software

Caribbean holiday vacation. Using, say, Simply Tax, you can choose What If from the View menu and type your expected proceeds from the sale of those mutual funds into one of the alternate tax plans, then zoom to the bottom of the screen to see how this action will affect the sum you owe the government. Indeed, you may think twice about



Jeff Shermack
Age: 46
Occupation: Math teacher
Goal: To pay as little as possible on fourth-quarter estimated taxes without incurring a penalty
Software: TurboTax Head
Start edition

a couple of mouths could save you a bundle.

### Making plans for April 16

Some users find they don't need early-bird editions—they plan all year round. Christopher Dunn, a 37-year-old manager of mortgage-backed securities in Washington, D.C., uses TurboTax, but not the early-bird version. "In December, I'm more interested in the holidays than taxes," he says.

One reason Dunn feels this way is that he tracks his tax status closely all year long within his personal-finance program, Quicken. He assigns transactions that affect his taxes—a donation to a children's fund, for instance—to the proper category—in this case, charity. Doing so marks the transaction as a tax-related item for his Schedule A.

Then, Dunn can just click on Quicken's Tax Planner menu option to see an estimate of his tax bill to date. Personal-finance managers such as Managing Your Money and Microsoft Money also let you assign categories to transactions and view reports of your current tax status.

When Dunn sits down with the final edition of TurboTax in '96, he plans to use the Quicken Tax-Link option on TurboTax's File

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### financial adviser

menu. (The early-bird TurboTax edition has this option, too.) Tax-Link displays a report showing how tax-related Quicken transactions will be imported into his return; for instance, every transaction in the charity category in Quicken should be linked with Schedule A in TurboTax.

Importing such financial data will be easier this year: You can now edit categories from within TaxLink. For example, last year, to change the list of payments assigned to a non-tax-related category called "fund drive" in Quicken to link them with Schedulc A. vou'd have to quit TaxLink and run Quicken to set new tax parameters for transactions in that category. This year, you can do it all from TaxLink. While the tie-in from Quicken to TurboTax is seamless. all the major tax programs can at least read the .txf finance files created by Quicken, Managing Your



Feeling in the pink? TurboTax helps make sure you don't go into the red.

Money or Microsoft Money.

Whether you use early-bird tax editions to plan ahead or you stay on top of your tax transactions throughout the year in your finance program (and doing both isn't a bad idea), one thing's clear: You may owe your PC a debt of gratitude when April 15 rolls around.

Gus Venditto is the anthor of Your Money: Total Financial Planning on Your Computer.

### shopper's guide

Here's how to get more information on the tax software mentioned in this article.

**Kiplinger's TaxCut** 

Both the floppy-disk and CD-ROM versions include Kiplinger's own tax advice; the CD-ROM adds video clips of Kiplinger experts. \$11.95, Planning; \$39.95, Final Filing (Windows, Windows CD-ROM) from Block Financial, (800) 235-4060, (203) 255-1441. Circle #550

**Personal Tax Edge** 

This is the best bargain in tax software; you get both the early and final versions for \$19.95. Tax advice is enhanced by the text of the best-selling guide J.K. Lasser's Your Income Tax.

\$10.05. Tax Planning and Final Filing editions (DOS. Windows)

\$19.95, Tax Planning and Final Filing editions (DOS, Windows, Windows 95, Macintosh, Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Parsons Technology, (800) 223-6925, (319) 395-9626. Circle #551

**Simply Tax** 

Simply Tax sports a cleaner interface than last year's version; it has explanations based on IRS publications, but no other expert advice. \$9.95, Plan Aliead; \$19.95, Final Filing (Windows, Windows 95, Windows CD-ROM, Windows 95 CD-ROM) from 4Home Productions, (800) 773-5445, (516) 342-2000. Circle #552

TurboTax, MacInTax

These best-sellers have stellar interfaces. The text of *How To Pay Zero Taxes* and video clips of tax experts enhance the CD-ROMs. \$29.95, *Head Start and Final Filing (DOS, Windows, Macintosh)*, or \$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from *Intuit*, (800) 964-1040, (619) 453-4446. Circle #553

**Note:** Before you buy any software, check your computer owner's manual to determine operating system, microprocessor, memory and disk space. Then read the software box or consult a salesperson to be sure the program and your computer are compatible. All prices are suggested or estimated retail.

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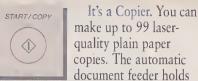
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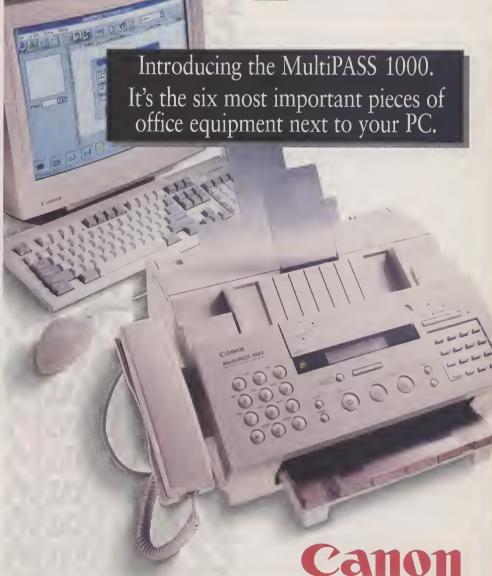
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# working at home

TOOLS FOR GETTING THE JOB DONE

Robert Lorincz's home business has taken off, but he isn't about to quit his day job—he's got more than two years to go on his hitch as a U.S. Marine. But while Robert's sta-

views P&D's catalog of trading cards, model planes and other goodies on-line rather than in the traditional brochure, the company saves 80 cents in printing and postage costs. "The Internet's potential is tremendous." declares Sparaco. "I'd have been stupid not to give it a try."

small-business owners is that the Internet's a level playing field. On the Net. "you can't tell if someone is working out of their home office or a building on Madison Avenue in New York," notes Daniel Janal, author of *The Online Marketing Handbook*. "A little company can look just as big as IBM" with a

snazzy presentation.

## Web and cash flow: small business hits it big on the Net

tioned at Camp Pendleton. Calif., his once-sleepy side business, One-Way Resume, now extends from the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli. How did this spare-time venture go global? Robert started marketing his services on the Internet's World Wide Web. Within days, inquiries ponred in from as far away as France and Australia, and his workload jumped sixfold. to

"When I get home." says Lorinez, who lives off the base. "I usually find about five e-mail requests for my free résumé evaluation service. Out of that, I'll probably get two jobs."

30 résumés a month.

Other home-business owners, too, are getting the message about the Internet's big-time marketing potential. Paul Sparaco operates P&D Collectibles from his kitchen in Middleburgh, N.Y. He received six catalog requests and completed one on-line sale in the first week after his company established a Web site. For every person who

John Holland's no fool, either. The rural California tie-dye T-shirt maker shows his work to a potential 30 million enstomers by marketing over the Internet, a far cry from the few thousand browsers As in any promotional plan, making a mark on the Internet depends to a great extent on knowing your audience. If your company offers products or services with appeal to a mass market, it can be an Internet mar-



who consider his shirts when they stroll by his booth at crafts fairs.

Internet marketing is still in its infancy, but industry analyst Forrester Research predicts the global computer network will bring businesses \$4.8 billion in annual sales by 1998. The good news for

keting success story; on the other hand, personal service providers with a local clientele—hairstylists, for instance—are probably wasting time and money establishing an Internet presence. It may seem stylish for someone cutting hair in Topeka to pitch his or her services around the world, but what good does it really do the business if the promo-

by john eckhouse

### working at home

tion reaches someone in Brisbane? In these cases, a Yellow Pages ad might be less chic, but it's likely to be more efficient.

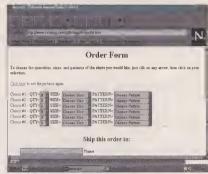
However, if you're selling products that people regularly order by mail, such as elothing or computer accessories, you've got a good chance to succeed. So do service providers whose skills require no face-to-face contact with customers, such as résumé writers and word-processing specialists.

### **Catch clients on the Web**

Most Internet marketing efforts focus on the World Wide Web, because of its multimedia eapabilities and "hyperlinks." Shoppers who visit your Web site (which is stored on a computer, called a Web server, that hooks into the Internet) can see your "pages," which may have text, graphies, photos, movies and audio clips that you make available. A simple click on a

hyperlink—an underlined, colorcoded word or phrase—whisks the viewer from one Web page to another, either within your site or at a site anywhere in the world that you think visitors to your page might like to know about.

To give your business a Web presence, start by creating a "home page." Here, you can give customers your direct pitch about your products or services, a eatalog with photos, a price list, your e-mail address and any other helpful information. Use the hypertext links to guide eustomers through your site; Paul Sparaeo, for instance, offers visitors 10 links, including a chance to examine his catalog's Featured Item of the Month in eolor. You can also tip off visitors to pages that relate to their interests—and perhaps have the people who maintain those pages reciproeate by adding a link that lets their visitors check out your wares. The



You can customize a Web page so it's made to order for your needs.

One-Way Resume home page connects to about 30 Web sites that Robert Lorincz bets job lumters will find helpful, and that can generate good will—and more business—for his service. All you need to know to link to another page is its Internet address, or URL (Uniform Resource Locator).

Many people have discovered it's possible to create a basic Web

# The new trading posts: advertising in on-line classifieds

ven if you're not ready to launch your own home page on the Internet's World Wide Web, there's more than one way to market your business in cyberspace. Most of the commercial on-line services, as well as some Internet newsgroups, invite members to post free or inexpensive classified ads.

America Online: Classifieds Online (Keyword: classifieds) is AOL's busiest messaging area, with more than 125,000 new ads posted each month. It costs nothing to

list an ad, which helps keep the action as chaotic as the busiest flea market—the merchandise changes nearly every day.

- CompuServe: Listing your ad in the Classifieds area (Go Classifieds) for a week costs \$1 per 65-character line of text; there's a two-line minimum.
- eWorld: The Macintosh-only service's free Classifieds section (Shortcut: classifieds) boasts a handy search service that lets customers zero in on specific products by name, price or geographic loca-

tion, instead of combing aimlessly through subject folders.

- Genie: Posting an ad in the classified area (Keyword: ads or page 740) for seven days costs 10 cents per 80-character line; a 14-day ad costs 15 cents per line.
- Prodigy: You'll pay \$10 to post a page (seven lines at 40 characters each) in the Classifieds section (Jump: classifieds) for 30 days. Each additional page costs \$1; your ad can be up to six pages long.
- The Internet: Some newsgroups permit members to post classified ads—in fact, that's the sole purpose of groups such as ca.forsale, misc.forsale.computers.memory, misc.forsale.computers.modems and misc.forsale.non-computer.—J.E.



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bers. You can also retrieve notes and dive right into any information you need when talking to a customer. It makes your communications more productive and you as smart as you can be about your business.

See the new AT&T Computer Telephone 8130. Visit your participating AT&T Phone Center or select retailer. Or call 1 800 233-2650, ext. 307.

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\*You must subscribe to the local telephone company's caller identification service; there are fees for this service and such service is not available in all areas

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### working at home

home page on their own. (Cheek *HomePC* in the coming months for a step-by-step guide.) However, hiring a consultant to do it for you is an attractive option; it will eost some money, but it may save you time and effort, and eould result in a better-looking and more effective marketing tool. Some consultants eharge \$1,000 or more to design. create and install a Web page, but steady competition is driving down the fees. (Our search on the Internet loeated more than 430 consultants and companies offering home-page design services.)

For example, Wayne Gonyea, a



The Web's links give small businesses the unscle of a virtual chain.

Web consultant in Plattsburgh, N.Y., designed his first Web sites for free to publicize his company, OnLine Solutions. He charged the next dozen customers \$25 a month, and only recently increased

# 5 do's and don'ts of Net marketing

hat makes an Internet marketing effort pay off? Here are three tips to get your on-line promo rolling, and two taeties to avoid.

• Promote your home page. If you don't let people know you have a home page, it's no more valuable than a billboard on a deserted highway. Link it to other pages, which in turn ean link to you, and get listings in Internet directories, such as Yahoo.

• Keep it fresh. Too many small-business owners think that once they build a Web site, their work is done. But to keep potential customers coming back, you need to update your Web pages with fresh material, just as retailers regularly change their window displays. If you work with a Web consultant, find out if your negotiated fees cover regular updates.

• Learn Netiquette. When you locate an Internet newsgroup that relates to your business, read the messages for a week or so before posting responses

> yourself, so you get a sense of how the group conducts itself. Find the FAQ (frequently asked questions) file, which explains the basics of how the group operates.

• Don't solicit within newsgroups, mailing lists or bulletin boards. If you post an outright pitch for your product, odds are

you'll be swamped with vitriolic e-mail from participants who resent commercial promotions intruding on their discussions.

• Avoid "spanning." Posting a message in a number of newsgroups at onee—regardless of the discussion topic—is called "spanning," after one of Monty Python's Flying Circus's signature skits. For instance, tell alt.aldus.pagemaker participants about the PageMaker add-on you've developed; don't bother the folks in waterskiing or backpacking newsgroups with it. —J.E.

Dept. 01

MODEM TEST RESULTS

# How does U.S. Robotics SPORTSTER STACK UP AGAINST OTHER LEADING V.34 28.8 MODEMS?



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# OFF THE SHELF, OUT OF TWO INDEPENDENT LABS PUT

THE THREE CRITICAL TEST PARAMETERS:

# COMPATUBILITY

## ARE ALL V.34 28.8 MODEMS CREATED EQUAL?

That was the question tackled by two independent testing labs — TeleQuality Associates of Golden, Colorado, and Henderson Communications Laboratories, Inc. of Moreno Valley, California.

While each testing facility used a different methodology and tested different units, both set out to rate the performance of the popular, best-selling external V.34 modems. Compatibility, connect rates, and how often maximum speeds were reached and maintained, were documented. The labs analyzed how effectively each manufacturer engineered its V34 modems, and how well each one realized the potential of this new technology under real-world conditions.

All units were comparably equipped and the latest version available. To eliminate any bias that might occur when testing between like modems, i.e. Sportster to Sportster, all tests by both labs employed a full compatibility test matrix: every modem was tested with every modem. In order to do well, each modem would have to successfully handle the quirks of all the others in both answer and originate modes.

First, an overview of TeleQuality's procedures:

The connect success rate tests were made with low, medium and high signal levels and incrementally varied noise from low to high. These tests were repeated over both a good (flat attenuation) and a bad (high rolloff 3002) phone line. All modems were pushed to their functional limits with 15 call cycles performed at each signal-to-noise (SNR) point. The percentage of successful connections for each SNR point was measured and graphed for all combinations of modems.

The performance tests were completed with the same types of phone lines, under the same SNR conditions using a highly compressible file transferred in both directions simultaneously. Again, the speed of the error-free data transfer was measured and graphed for all phone line and SNR points on all combinations of modems.

What follows on these two pages is a closer look at the results of the TeleQuality testing. On the back page are highlights of the Henderson test results. In both tests the bottom line says the same thing: buy a Sportster.

### SPORTSTER OUTPERFORMS THE PACK IN COMPATIBILITY

In order for modems to interact successfully, and at maximum speeds, each must be capable of assessing and compensating for differences between itself and its counterpart. The ideal modem is sensitive, tolerant and reactive. It identifies connection characteristics and makes the necessary adjustments in order to wring out maximum throughput — regardless of the operational idiosyncrasies of the modem on the other end of the line.

Given the common configuration of two same-brand modems, the ultimate compatibility would be expected when modem "A" is dialed into another modem "A". This study found that was not necessarily the case. In fact, some modems performed better when paired with a more robust competitive modem than when paired with themselves.

### PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT WHEN PAIRED WITH A SPORTSTER



Connection rate improvement of modems paired with a Sportster compared to modems paired with themselves.

The study revealed that some modems had difficulty connecting to others at optimum speeds. In fact, certain modems showed substandard performance even when connected to themselves.

U.S. Robotics' Sportster displayed the most consistent compatibility with all other modems in the test. Interestingly, other modems in the study performed better when connected with the Sportster than when connected to themselves.

COMPU

1-80



# THE BOX, AND ONLINE THE TOP BRANDS TO THE TEST.

## CONNECTIVITY

# **THROUGHPUT**

## SPORTSTER SUPERIOR IN CONNECTING AT OPTIMUM SPEEDS.

Because connection success rates can be enhanced at the expense of speed, the lab defined and measured connectivity as a function of connection success and error-free throughput. This measure yields a performance profile more indicative of true user satisfaction — where connecting at optimum speeds with other modems is preferable to connecting at slower data rates.

Connection success rates and throughput scores were combined and normalized to establish a top performance standard (100) in order to show the relative connectivity scores of each modem.

### COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER MODEMS AT OPTIMUM SPEED



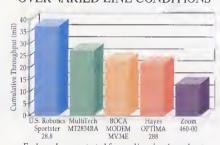
Each modem was tested for send/receive throughput in paired combination with every other modem including itself.

These results showed a great variability in the connectivity of the modems studied. *The U.S. Robotics Sportster outperformed all other modems in the test by demonstrating its ability to consistently connect at optimum speeds*. Differences were quite dramatic with scores for other modems in the study falling from 18% to 64% below that of the Sportster.

### SPORTSTER SETS STANDARDS IN THROUGHPUT.

Throughput refers to the maximum amount of data a given modem can transmit over the widest variety of line conditions. Given perfect circumstances, any modem can reach its top speeds and maximum throughput. But end-users do not have the luxury of controlling conditions. Many variables can effect line quality, from geography to simple random channel assignment upon dial-in. Whatever hurdles may be present to impair maximum throughput, better modems sense them and initiate countermeasures to insure peak performance over the widest variety of line conditions.

# CUMULATIVE THROUGHPUT OVER VARIED LINE CONDITIONS



Each modem was tested for send/receive throughput in paired combination with every other modem including itself.

The study found that some modems performed significantly better than others in this regard. The top performing modems effectively dealt with connection variables and line noise levels to deliver higher maximum throughput. In this test, U.S. Robotics' Sportster delivered the most data over the widest variety of line conditions — up to 177% better than other modems.

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### THE FIRST TEST WAS NO FLUKE!

Henderson Communications Laboratories also conducted tests with the leading modems on the

market to measure each one's ability to connect and transmit data without error.

₩ In this study, connect rate performance was measured while attempting 119 connections over a range of test loop combinations as established in the Telecommunications Industry Association TSB-38 and TSB-37A Table 2 standard. A success was recorded each time a connection was

established and a short message was transmitted error-free.

The results clearly indicate U.S. Robotics'
Sportster's superiority with a 100% connection rate
— outperforming the other modems in the study by
as much as 36%.

Another performance measure was throughput. In this phase, each modem's ability to perform in typical

asynchronous applications was rated based on its ability to transmit data over a variety of telephone network conditions. A TAS 1200 simulator was used on a select group of test channels, as outlined in TSB-37A Tables 3 through 6, to represent 95% of all possible telephone line types.

The research confirms the performance leadership of U.S. Robotics' Sportster V.34. *Combining its* 16% *cumulative* 

throughput advantage over the next best modem with a connect success rate up to 41% better than others tested, Sportster clearly provides superior overall performance. )

Henderson Communications Laboratories



Successful connections to same-brand modems in 119 trials

## **CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

The V.34 standard offers tremendous promise for enabling new and more powerful applications. However, the V.34 standard carries with it challenging

technological demands for modem manufacturers. How well each manufacturer addresses these challenges will ultimately shape the end-user's experience with V.34.

Based on data obtained in this study, it's clear that some modem makers have embraced and managed the complexities of V.34 technology significantly better than others.

The U.S. Robotics Sportster proved that across all modems studied, it consistently delivered on the promises of V.34 — increased compatibility, connect rate and throughput.

Sportster clearly demonstrated its superiority. It is intuitively designed, robustly engineered and flawlessly manufactured.

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\*Complete test reports available on request.

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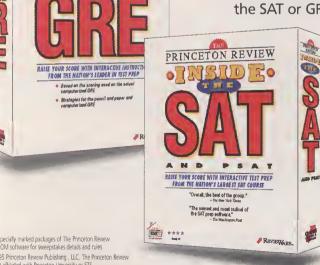
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### working at home

his fee to \$250 for six months of service, including building, storing and maintaining Web sites, usually on his Made in America! Mini-Mall Web page.

Many of the companies that let customers use the Internet—known as Internet service providers, or ISPs—also offer package deals including home-page anthoring and site maintenance services, as well as storage space on a Web server. An ISP employee will design, install and maintain your page, updating it with new product or service information, photos, and price lists that you supply. Some consultants and ISPs will even process credit-card transactions for you (generally for a commission fee). If your business isn't set up to accept credit cards, this added convenience for consumers can increase vour sales.

The Internet itself is the best place to find a Web consultant. If you've got World Wide Web access, surf around, taking note of home pages you like. Most will list the creator's name at the bottom.

There are a number of things to consider when judging the quality of a Web consultant's work. Effective home pages balance text and attractive graphics. For a handson test, click on the interactive links to see if they take you smoothly from page to page.

Check out the consultant's creativity, too—for example, does the text interest you? Robert Lorincz created his own home page, and came up with a bold promise to catch visitors' eyes: The résumé he produces will convince an interviewer to see the applicant within 30 days or he'll redo it at no charge.

To get the best deal, obtain price quotes from at least three sources, and be sure to ask what the price includes. Does it cover updates of information, such as weekly specials? How about building in video clips that demonstrate



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## working at home

post messages in some of the Internet's 10.000 discussion areas. or newsgroups, accessible via Web browsers or newsgroup reader software. Newsgroups generally revolve around specific topics, so hooking up with the right ones can help you hit your target andience; if you sell herbal lotions, for instance, you might take part in newsgroups devoted to holistic remedies or the outdoors. But be tasteful; blatant hucksterism in a newsgroup often invites a barrage of angry e-mail from people who resent the Internet being used for commercial purposes.

Instead, participate in the newsgroup to create a positive image of your business. Be helpful by answering questions people post, for example, and make sure that at the bottom you include a .sig file—up to four lines of text that identifies you, with your phone number, postal address, and e-mail and home-page addresses. Include the information on your business cards, letterhead and promotional materials, too; any customers you reach on paper may be tempted to take a look on the Web as well.

No advertising campaign is a sure thing. Still, the Internet offers little risk with its small up-front cost, and it reaches an audience that already stretches into the millions and is growing every day. Be positive—and realistic. If your business makes a big splash on the Internet, do you have the staff and equipment to follow through? You may prefer to start slowly to see what level of online activity you attract and can handle comfortably. For instance. T-shirt maker John Holland offers five styles for in-person customers but only two on his Web page. Or, instead of maintaining a Web site, you may prefer simply to place a classified ad in key discussion groups and on commercial on-line services (for a list of on-line ad opportunities, see page 354).

While the Internet promises no marketing miracles, it is a solid tool that rewards creativity over rich marketing budgets. In this age of over-the-top TV hype and ubiquitous late-night infomercials, that's truly an Amazing Discovery.

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# on-line connections

EXPLORING THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY

I read the message on my computer screen, but I didn't believe it: I was about to be booted off my on-line service.

Certain that my account with America Online was paid in full, I indignantly called the serious (and more common) ways kids can find trouble on-line—namely, making it themselves. Pranks like disrupting conversations in chat rooms or using profanc language aren't capital crimes. But to keep your kids (and your family's account) in the clear, it pays to think about what antics kids can get up to on-line—and how the commercial services punish infractions—before you find out the hard way.

How to keep kids' hijinks from hijacking your account

number shown on screen, only to learn my cyberspace privileges had been revoked not because of missed payments, but because of "crimes" traced to the screen name used by my 11-year-old son, Bert.

It was a sobering moment. Parents always struggle with the thin margin between responsibilities that are clearly theirs and those that belong to their children. And maybe this time I'd put a little more on my son's shoulders than he was ready to handle.

"You wouldn't give a teenager keys to the car before you were sure he knew the rules of the road," chided the AOL representative who handled my case. "But that's just what you did with the keys that let your child access the information highway."

Mueli as I'd prefer not to admit it, she had a point. Naturally, I'd worried about Bert's safety in cyberspace, and I'd issued the standard caveats—never give anyone you meet on-line your name, phone number or home address. But I hadn't thought about the less signed up with America Online, I skimmed the terms of service after they popped up on the screen. I didn't pay much attention to the warning that my

When our family



account could be terminated after three violations of the rules—after all, I had every intention of being a good cybercitizen. But since I hadn't discussed those rules and their repercussions with Bert, he more or less shrugged off two warnings about disrupting a chatroom conversation—and he certainly didn't mention them to me. His "third strike" also

took place in a chat room, when he and a friend mischievonsly typed in a common obscenity sprinkled with asterisks—they thought they were "fooling" the censors. I hate to break the news to them, but the censors have seen it all before. Although officials from the on-line services downplay the number of ehildren who put their parents' accounts in jeopardy, some of the people who run kids' chat rooms tell ine they know of many youngsters who've been locked out of specific forums—or even kicked off services—for acting up.

### Ain't misbehavin'?

I had to wonder how many of those kids, like Bert, might have been persuaded to cool it if they'd been given a clear list of do's and don'ts before their parents let them sign on (for tips on what advice to pass along, see "Tell your kids..." on page 372).

The first thing that your children need to understand is that even if they have their very own screen name, it's still your account, and



America Online lets parents impose access limits if kids can't act responsibly.

room, he announces, "The snack bar is open." Other kids can then ask for their favorite cybertreats, which he posts by typing in his food illustrations.

Each menu item in this virtual snack bar occupies just one line on the screen, so it's not considered

nicknamed George Carlin to scan for words the service considers generally offensive in their forums and chat areas. "You can type those words until you're blue in the face, but they won't get through," Ek says. If the program detects an impermissible word, it blocks the

# Some kids amuse themselves—and risk penalties—by disrupting chats. 'It is an act of on-line vandalism,' says a Prodigy official.

any mischief they make on-line will be traced back to you. Cyberspace feels anonymous, but kids must realize it's not; they're accountable for their actions—and to you.

Ann Peterson, a Northern California mom who has been active in various on-line forums for six years, says she taught her 11-year-old son the ropes by letting him observe her on-line. "He knows that he'd better not disrupt chat rooms or use bad language, because he's heard what I've said about those things when they occurred while we were on-line together," she says.

Ann figures that kids often do outrageous things in cyberspace to get attention, so she's encouraged her son to make himself stand out in more creative ways. For instance, he figured out how to create "drawings" of french fries, hamburgers and hot dogs by using keyboard characters. When he wants to make a splash in a kids' chat

disruptive. But parents will do well to caution their children against "scrolling," an activity I would have regarded as little more than harmless mischief had it not accounted for two of the three strikes against my son. Scrolling means typing characters (most often nonsense or a joke) in the dialog box of a chat room and entering that text again and again so that the phrase fills up the screen, preventing anyone else from getting a word in edgewise; as more extraneous lines are added, the text posted by other participants scrolls off the screen. "You can see how that would disrupt a conversation," says Brian Ek, vice president of public affairs at Prodigy. "It is an act of on-line vandalism.

Another infraction that gets kids into trouble is the use of profanity. Remember stand-up comic George Carlin's list of seven words you can't say on TV? The people at Prodigy do—they use a program

message and sends the user e-mail explaining why the posting won't make it into the public forum.

Occasionally the screening mechanism causes problems. One subscriber trying to explain the finer points of dog breeding in a pet forum received repeated warnings that she had violated on-line standards of decency every time she sent postings including the standard term for a female dog.

Perhaps because so much of what's deemed offensive depends on context, most services choose not to censor specific words automatically. Instead, they expect that members of the on-line community will let them know when language or pictures are objectionable to the community. In most venues, that means messages and images that are seen as racist, sexist or otherwise abusive.

"If someone is offended by what they see on-line, they can send a private message to our standards

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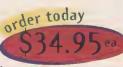
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### on-line connections

adviser," says Jenna Woodul, community building manager for eWorld, Apple's on-line service. "If it's in a chat room, it helps if they actually cut and paste the offending message from the screen."

### Laying down the law

All major commercial on-line scrvices agree that repeated demonstrations of obnoxious or disruptive behavior will get you thrown off line. But they differ in what they'll tolerate and the way they'll notify you that your account is in jeopardy. Here's a quick rundown of the policics of the major services.

• America Online says it's very rare for people to lose their accounts for bad behavior, but AOL has a reputation for a strict threestrikes-and-you're-out policy. As I can testify, a parent may not know when a child has accumulated violations, since AOL uses on-screen warnings, which are easy for a child to "forget" to mention.

Make sure your child understands that an AOL warning is like a ticket for running a red light. The difference is that after three strikes, not only will his or her license be lifted, but the family car will be impounded. If you'd like to keep your child out of areas you think might lead to mischief, take advantage of AOL's Parental Controls, which set limits on the areas a child's ID can access.

• CompuServe doesn't have a global standard for on-line behavior. Each of the service's more-than 900 forums is run independently; it's up to the forum manager to decide what constitutes unacceptable conduct. Forum managers usually issue warnings for scrolling or inappropriate language.

"Forum managers can also lock out specific user-ID numbers," notes CompuServe spokeswoman Michelle Moran. "The user will still have access to the rest of the service, but not to that forum." Although CompuServe has terminated memberships for people who've caused trouble in several forums, Moran says the service always investigates before pulling the plug.

CompuServe's monthly invoices, which list the forums accessed dur-

ing the billing period, may give you some insight into where your child's been spending time on-line. If you disapprove of some of his or her hangouts, you can contact the customer-service department and have the youngster's ID locked out of particular areas.

• On cWorld, "if we know we're dealing with kids, we'll usually cut them a little slack," says Woodul. But after three deliberate violations of rules, the account will be cut off—for the rest of the day or indefinitely, depending on the seriousness of the infractions.

• The Microsoft Network might

# Tell your kids...

- Be yourself. Don't pretend to be other people—including your parents—by using their screen names or passwords.
- Protect the privacy of your family's on-line account. Never share your password with anyone, either on-line or in person.
- Be polite. On-line forum participants won't tolerate language that is obscene, profane, racist or sexist.
- No one likes a showoff.
   Disrupting on-line chats by "scrolling," or filling the screen with irrelevant comments or gibberish, will almost certainly put your online privileges in jeopardy.
- Don't laugh off a warning. Receiving a violation message from an on-line service is like getting a ticket from a police officer. Tell parents about warnings you've received—even if you think they're unjustified or you're embarrassed. —C.J.

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### on-line connections

penalize a deliberate rule-breaker by "spectating" the account, which means the person can then observe on-line forums, but can't participate. In the few months the service had been in business as of press time, only one family had lost an account because of a child who repeatedly challenged a forum's rules.

• As mentioned above, Prodigy's screening software makes it impossible to post the most common profanitics and obscenities to a message board. This means not only that kids can't get in trouble for using bad language, but they won't see it, either.

Prodigy uses a tiered system of penalties for people who find other ways to be offensive. If a subscriber enters an objectionable posting on a message board or dis-



eWorld suspends rule-breakers, but kids are often given a second chance.

rupts a chat room, he or she receives e-mail explaining why that behavior is unacceptable.

If the subscriber persists, Prodigy can put a specific ID within an account on read-only status for message boards, or lock the ID out of the chat rooms where people have been offended.

"The warnings and read-only status are like being sent to the penalty box in hockey," says Ek. "If the violations continue, we reserve the right to eject the player by suspending the lD."

If you want your children to "play nice" in cyberspace, it's up to you to make sure they know the rules of the game. Kids and parents—and the entire on-line community—will be better off if we all take the basics of civil electronic discourse seriously.

Carolyn Jabs managed to get her AOL account reinstated; her e-mail address is carolynhpc@aol.com.

# A FEW OF THE THINGS YOUR KIDS MIGHT PICK UP ON THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY.

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# \* Reading the Stars \*

Each product reviewed in Fun and Games, Lifestyles + Learning, Kid Raves and Gear + Gadgets is rated on a scale of 0 to 4 stars. Before you buy any software, check your computer owner's manual to determine operating system, microprocessor, memory and disk space. Then read the software box or consult a salesperson to be sure the program and your computer are compatible. All prices are suggested or estimated retail.



Whether you choose **ECCO THE DOLPHIN, COMIX ZONE, TOMCAT ALLEY** or all three, you can't lose! Because Sega has enhanced these hit games specifically for today's faster PC processors.

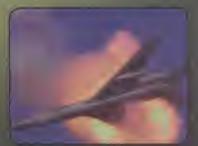
Think of it. The speed and quick-response action you love about Sega together with the graphic sophistication of PC software. What could be funner\*?



COMIX ZONE now features lightning-quick arcade-style action, instant installation for instant fighting, as well as great graphics drawn by real comic book artists!



ecco the DOLPHIN now offers higher resolution graphics, expanded difficulty levels, added video segments and multiple control modes.



TOMCAT ALLEY has a higher video frame rate (20 frames per second), over an hour of near-VHS quality video, plus full-screen video, And, it's joystick-controllable!

\*Yeah, we know "funner" isn't really a word. And "Ecco" and "Comix" aren't spelled that way. But who asked you anyway?

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CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 90



# 

### Days of future blast

n the video arcades, BattleTech is more than a game—it's a virtual universe where players sit in claustrophobic consoles and blow each other up. MechWarrior 2, set in the blistering BattleTech world of the year 3057, brings that head-to-head, free-for-all combat action to the PC surprisingly well.

After you decide which of two rival clans you'll play for, you embark on any of 50 missions in your menacing "mech," a human-looking vehicle designed to shield you and flatten your enemies. You'll destroy enemy bases, blast the other mechs in your path and conduct reconnaissance missions that uncover artifacts from other worlds. (Doom fans should keep an eye out for a surprise cameo by a BFG-9000.)

Show your mettle as a warrior and you'll go mech-to-mech with the leader of the rival clan—but qualifying for this final showdown is no picnic. The missions are simple at first, with large targets and somewhat sluggish foes, but the action gets more intense; a warrior has to plan carefully, act quickly and shoot accurately to reach the top.

Mech Warrior isn't casy to play right out of the box, with its numbing variety of keyboard commands, but its tutorial section makes lcarning fun. An overview of the mech's navigation system, weapons, steering and inspection capabilities eases you through a crash course in keyboard gymnastics. Spend an hour in Cadet Training, and you'll be ready for combat.

Oddly, however, the training doesn't prepare you to customize

your mech. With its long, weaponpacked arms and powerful lcgs, your vehicle can be built for speed or set up to carry as much ammo as possible. Your choices are important: If your mech is too slow or too light, or it doesn't have enough ar-

Mech-

Warrior 2

Futuristic tank

combat

tillery, you'll be a sitting duck for opposing mechs.

The customization can get complicated; you have a choice of 15 chassis, each with several vari-

ations, as well as endless options for customizing even those variations you can change engines, modify the mechs' armor and artillery, or make them jump like Michael Jordan. Configuring battleships is a fairly standard feature in today's combat games, but it adds something special to the challenge and depth in MechWarrior 2.

If you've been lamenting that your computer hasn't delivered the kind of action that's sucked all the quarters from your pocket at the arcade, MechWarrior 2's rollicking ride through the BattleTech universe will deliver the excitement you've been longing for. The depth of play, superior graphics and wide range of options pack this game with 31st-century combat at its full-throttle finest.

\$59.95 (DOS, DOS CD-ROM) from Activision, (800) 477-3650, (310) 473-9200. Circle #463

# Dirty deeds at the amusement park

ey, Buddy! P'ssst! Over here! Wanna try your luck at Shufflepuck? Maybe some Copher Gong to get you going? Everyone's a winner!

Actually, everyone's a huckster at Skyview, an amusement park crawling with underground carnival life after dark. It's the intriguing setting for Panic in the Park,



Mad mechs: If you're going to prove your mettle in MechWarrior 2, you'll need one of these.

which features an interactive mystery that's actually a bit of a digital sideshow when compared with the program's other charms.

You find Skyview on its last legs



after the death of its owner. It's due to be torn down, pending resolution of a battle over the property between the operator's

twin daughters, Jamie and Janie (both played by *Baywatch*'s bodacions Erika Eleniak). To save the park, you have to find the deed of ownership. On the hunt, you'll meet some of the strangest losers who've ever worked a midway. These characters—who appear on the screen in full-motion, full-screen video segments dressed in bumble-bee costumes, motorcycle gear, sleazy '40s mob attire and other odd getups—can guide you to the deed.

Before they share their secrets with you, though, you'll have to beat them at their own games: 12 pennyarcade-style romps that *almost* feel like the classics, including Skee Ball, Whack-a-Mole and Tiddlywinks.

Beat the carnies, and they'll give you respect, information and valuable extra tokens. Lose, and you'll get nothing but lip and a cold shoulder. Keep your eyes and ears

open as you walk the grounds, too. The clues you find along the way will come in handy.

Unlike the puzzles in many computer adventures, Panic in the Park's challenges require more mouse dexterity than mental skill. To play Skee Ball, for example,

fun and games

you'll have to master the technique of dragging the mouse back and pushing it forward to release the ball. A flick of the wrist and a little finesse can help yon hit the 100-point

target every time. Sidewinder, which asks you to guide a ball through a maze without rolling it into any of the moving board's holes, requires just the slightest tilt.

Once you conquer the games of skill, the mystery takes center stage. You'll comb the park's of-

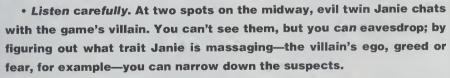


# Stuck at a midway point? Take 5 tips for Panic in the Park

he shills that line the midway won't help you win much of anything in Panic in the Park, but you can trust us—we've got inside information. (Fair warning: If you'd rather figure it all out for yourself, stop reading now.)

 Everyone really is a winner. Even if you're hopelessly uncoordinated, you can get past an arcade game anytime. Just hit Ctrl-W to bypass a particular skill game. You

can always return later to play the games for fun.



• Protect your tokens. The park is dangerous after dark. Store your tokens in one of the security lockers found on each concourse; it could keep you from losing everything to a mugger.

• Take a tip from Fred Astaire. Or at least pay attention to the billboards for dance lessons. They contain a valuable hint to help you solve the staircase puzzle that leads you to the Oracle's chamber. If you have two left feet, pick up the sheet of paper at the foot of the stairs for an equally effective clue.

• Remember key words. To enter the Oracle's chamber, you'll have to solve a word puzzle. The puzzle is simple, but the word is significant. Remember it. — $J.\,C.$ 

# What kind of parent lets their kid play with the Power Rangers hours at a time?





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#### One disc fits all

emember the VCR war of the early '80s? You do if you bought a Betamax, then watched how quickly your superior technology became obsolete. The chances of a similar battle on the multimedia front seem



thankfully slim now that Sony, Philips Electronics, Time Warner and Toshiba America agreed this fall to a common standard for digital "videodisk" technology. The new disk, which is about the same size as today's five-inch compact disc, is designed to hold digital video, audio and computer data.

One videodisk will have roughly 4.7 gigabytes of data capacity per layer (dwarfing the current 650-megabyte standard for CD-ROMs), which will enable it to hold videoheavy software programs, more music than today's CDs, and full-length movies.

Current CD-ROMs and audio CDs will work in the forthcoming videodisk players, which should be in stores by the end of 1996, selling for around \$500. Analysts expect the players eventually to replace CD-ROM drives, andio CD players and VCRs.

But don't throw out your old equipment just yet; you won't be able to record on a videodisk at first, and using the machines with existing stereos or TVs will likely require additional hardware—not to mention that you'll have to do all your listening/viewing/playing in one room. —Keith Kirkpatrick

fices for clues about the deed's whereabouts and why it was taken. If you pay attention to these hints, as well as others strewn about the midway, you'll soon find

the deed and the do-no-gooder.

With about a dozen poter

With about a dozen potential outcomes, the mystery has some staying power, but it almost seems like an afterthought compared with the more challenging arcade action and kitschy earnival activities that give Panic in the Park its pizzazz. Like the real thing, they require steady hands and excellent aim; unlike the real thing, they're not fixed.

\$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from WarnerActive, (800) 693-3253, (818) \$41-0737. Circle #464

## Take me into the ballgame

f you hanker for peanuts and Cracker Jaek during the long winter months, you'll quickly warm up to All-Star Baseball. With its vast store of video clips and topnotch announcers Al Michaels and Tim McCarver, this game is like a TV broadcast spiced with interactive elements.

All-Star Baseball is the first PC ballgame to use video of major-lea-

All-Star Baseball guers in action. You create the lineup, then cue each move for either the National or American League. Each side has 18 of

the game's finest on its roster: pitcher David Cone and shortstop Cal Ripken Jr. make the show for the AL, for instance, while catcher Mike Piazza and outfielder Moises Alou take the field for the NL.

A unique catcher's-eye view puts the focus squarely on the pitcherbatter confrontation: When your team is at the plate, your mouse controls the type, placement and timing of each swing; in the field, you determine the pitch (fastball, curveball or offspeed pitch) and its

#### fun and games

location (high and inside, low outside corner, or right down the middle). Once you set the pitch or the swing, sit back and watch the video footage of the play; it's this element

that makes it feel so much like you're watching the game on TV.

Michaels and McCarver add to the realism with context-sensitive play-by-play coverage. Michaels announces each play, while Mc-Carver provides his running commentary for each of the players. If you listen closely, you can pick up hints on how to read a batter or anticipate a pitcher's strategy.



All-Star Baseball might strike out with rotisserie-ball players and stat freaks. The 18 players on each side must all have no-trade contracts (you can't change your squad). and there are no lifelike variables (it's always sunny, and no player ever gets hurt). But the program's straightahead approach and seamless use of video make All-Star Baseball a standout in a league of by-the-numbers, stat-heavy copycats.

\$59.99 (DOS CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM), from Accolade, (800) 245-7744, (408) 985-1700. Circle #465

#### Windows 95 mph

he first auto-racing game for Windows 95 is indeed one of the fastest motor-sports simulations on the shelves—as well as one of the most simplistic. The action in Al Unser Jr. Arcade Racing pumps pure adrenaline, with none of the usual delays—like cut scenes that try to tell an irrelevant story—that often mar PC racing; there's nary a pit stop in the game. If only



The game is smart enough to let you decide your own fate in a multi-tiered storyline—and sinister enough to make you come back for more."

"Dust is a fantastic game that will redefine what you think of CD-ROM adventures." —CD-ROM Today

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—Flectronic Entertainment

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there were more fuel for thought.

It appears the only thing Indy 500 champ Al Unser Jr. lent this program was his name and the



photo that appears when you slip the disc into the drive to launch the game automatically (thanks to Windows 95). After that, it's you against nine digital drivers on 15 fantasy tracks. You can use a mouse, keyboard or joystick to control your steering wheel, but be warned: The other drivers fly around the courses. Practice making your turns if you want to take the checkered flag while any competitor is still out on the course.

At least you don't have to worry about tweaking your ride. You can choose any of 10 vehicles—each with different ads on

their sides—but unlike many racing games, you'll take each one as it comes. Remember: The point is to zip around the tracks, not to learn how to survive on a real course.

Indeed, what's most impressive about the program is its sheer

1/2 Al Unser Jr. Arcade Racino Anto racing

speed under the nascent Windows 95 operating system; the view of the course from the driver's seat is bound to send vour heartbeat

racing. The graphics are fine, too, with people lining the track, cities rising up over the landscape, and plenty of road and scenery detail.

The speed and video quality of Al Unser Jr. Arcade Racing proves Windows 95's performance potential; the program offers arcade fans blazingly fast fun.

\$40 (Windows 95 CD-ROM) from Mindscape, (800) 234-3088, (415) 897-9900. Circle #466

#### A tension getter

n arsenal of heavy ammunition isn't the only way to get an adrenaline rush at the PC. Sometimes a simple puzzle game can do the trick. In Under Pressure, there aren't any guns, complicated story lines or three-dimensional monsters to chase. A clock and a shifting series of tiled grids are all it takes to set your blood to boiling.

The game gives you mere seconds to maneuver your triangle-, circle-, square- and star-shaped tiles into the appropriate "energy tanks" along the perimeter of the irregularly styled game board. It may sound easy, but the time limit and the mouse maneuvers it



requires make for frenetically frustrating fun. Moving a piece into the right position risks ruining the strategic placement of the other pieces on

the board. And though some time limits are moderately charitable, others are shockingly short, even at the early levels; some "easy" puzzles give you just 17 seconds to solve them; none gives you more than 90.

A level-7 puzzle (there are 60 levels in all) sent me back to



#### Alien role? It came from cyberspace

ver wonder what it's like to play a role in an interactive game before it hits PC screens? Aspiring actor John Walsh found out when he was cast as an alien in a CD-ROM adventure. Here's his report.

What separates me from 10,000 other hot-tub Johnnies combing Backstage for acting roles? My AOL membership. The day I subscribed, I found the Casting

Forum (Keyword: casting). After just a few on-line chats. I landed the role of an alien explorer in a CD-ROM production called The Armageddon Device. I was perfect for the role, the director told me. Was it my brooding, Chekovian intensity? My Shakespeare training? "We need someone tall," he said.

The following Sunday, I was tramping through a sandy pit in elaborate—and hot—prosthetic makeup.
"What kind of alien am I?" I

asked. "What sort of childhood did I have?"

"You had an *alien* childhood," I was told. "Now wave to your little robot friend...the one you can't see because we're going to animate him in later.'

I soon resumed my human guise with spirit-gum remover and skilled professional help. "Try taking this off yourself and you'll rip the skin right off your face," one makeup artist told me cheerfully. Luckily, I kept my skin. Too bad my character didn't—he gets vaporized in the first two minutes of gameplay.



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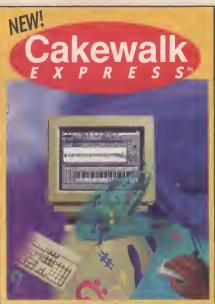








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square one about two dozen times before I got it right. Angstridden and antsy, I decided it was time to take a break when I found myself making careless clicks with

my mouse as I tried desperately to line up the arrows. Nevertheless, I returned to finish the level (after about six more tries) half an hour later, then quickly whipped through three more levels before hitting the next super-stumper.

As in many games, power-ups and obstacles arise as the levels get more complicated. Walls and spinning stoppers block your passage; ignoring a bomb or hitting the board's edge ends your turn with a bang. Transporters, chargers, shape mutators, and "life" and "time" bonuses will help you out, but you'll still have to plot every move deliberately; each wasted click makes your mouse feel like a panic button.

Under Pressure packs plenty of heat; your sternest test may be keeping your cool under fire.

\$29.95 (Windows 95 CD-ROM) from Starhill Productions, (800) 304-4263, (415) 442-5000. Circle #467

#### Stop gun

agger's Rage? Ennui is more like it. In an age of evermore-dazzling three-dimensional space-combat games that make you a feel like a top gun, watching your tiny airplane scoot around a big screen while you shoot other tiny planes is about as dull as gaming gets.

As Kurt "Dagger" Kaso, you pose as a Mercy Pilot entrusted



to infiltrate the shadowy Pogodyne Corp. and determine if the enormous conglomerate is responsible for pirate raids that

have decimated all the other companies in the United Planets. You shoot down the pirates in a variety of missions—some challenging, some not.

#### fun and games

In fact, the biggest challenge is finding any drama in the program. You can choose from four fighter planes and a dozen weapons, but the odd bird's-eye

vicw of the action makes the program feel more like a board game than a shoot-'em-up, and long delays while each mission loads kill any potential momentum.

The segments between missions stall the gameplay even further. "Movie" footage pops up, shot using special tools that give the

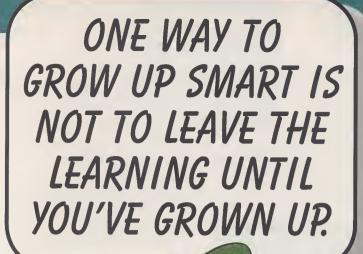


characters a 3-D look—but the artsy graphics just don't work; lip-synching is annoyingly off-kilter, and the characters move in agonizingly slow motion. Dagger's whisker stubble is probably intended to make him appear rough-and-tumble, but it looks more like he met a toddler who took a crayon to his face. If you play this game, you may have to fight the urge to reach for the Crayolas yourself.

\$49.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from Microforum, (800) 465-2323, (416) 656-6406. Circle #468

#### Nintendo '94 just won't cut it in a Windows 95 world

alk about taking a step back in time. Originally released in 1994 for Super Nintendo, MegaMan X is still a simplistic sidescroller—the background moves from right to left as your



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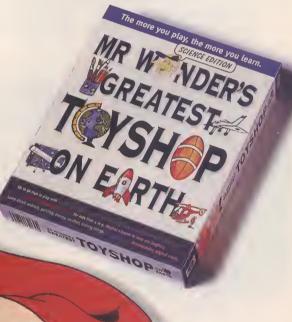
the shelves they know it's going to be fun and you know they are going to learn something.



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Din Medi.

character moves from left to right, creating the illusion that the character is moving forward.

In this PC-game adaptation,



MegaMan (who looks a little like the old cartoon character Speed Racer in a Smurf costume) must wipe out eight

Maverick Hunters, who busy themselves by slaughtering humans and plotting to take over the world. Then you go one-on-one with their leader, a brute named Sigma.

You guide MegaMan across a futuristic, two-dimensional world; he jumps, runs and shoots, while robots and other scary machines try to zap the life out of him. Every time you make a kill, you gather up your victim's weapons and advance a level.

But nover mind all that; the game boils down to pounding six keys: the left and right cursors for running, the Ctrl key for extra speed, the Alt key for jumping, the spacebar for shooting, and the tab key to rifle through the eight weapons MegaMan can use on his way.

Kids who haven't yet been jaded by the

latest 64-bit set-top game boxes—like Jaguar, or Sony's Playstation—might enjoy this PC program, but the blocky (albeit colorful) DOS graphics make the



game look and feel more like shareware than today's slicker commercial releases. And the gameplay—which bumps you back to the beginning or midpoint of

#### fun and games

each level whenever the maniacal mavericks manage to zap you—is bound to alienate all but the most devoted Nintendo fans.

\$39.99 (DOS CD-ROM) from Capcom, (408) 774-0400. Circle #469

#### Tell Roger Wilco he's

over and out

Space Quest 6: The Spinal Frontier pays weird homage to sci-fi films, with knowing references to movies such as *Innerspace* and *Star Wars*. But the humor is lost in the tedium of the search for stellar stuff and the time spent figuring out what to do with your booty.

The sixth installment of the Space Quest series finds hero Roger Wilco, space janitor, quite literally





# WE'VE CREATED SOMETHING FOR WINDOWS 95 THAT'LL MAKE YOU WORK LESS EFFICIENTLY.

Your "In Box" is piled so high it's been declared a fire hazard. Who cares? With Shockwave Assault, the first ground-level action shooter native for





Windows' 95, you're busy saving the earth.

Las Vegas. Hollywood. London. Egypt.

And other real-world locations are at risk
of being swallowed by hostile alien forces.

Luckily, Shockwave Assault is fully auto play. So you just load the CD and go. Blast away with arcade-style

graphics and action. It's your job to save the world. Which beats the hell out of whatever you do now.



#### SHOCKWAVE A S S A U L T

Check out the action at http://www.ea.com/eastudios.html



Shockwave and the Electronic Arts Studios logo are trademarks of Electronic Arts. Electronic Arts Is a registered trademark of Electronic Arts. Windows' is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation.



**★**1/2 Space Quest 6: The Spinal Frontier

stripped of his rank as a Star-Con Federation captain and reassigned to swab the decks on the SCS Deepship 86. The adventure begins in

outer space but ends up deep in the bloodstream of Corpsman Stellar Santiago. Once Roger gets under Stellar's skin, he must travel over gall bladder and through paucreas to defeat the evil Sharpei, who has invaded the same poor fellow.

You have to plod through about half the game to reach this new frontier—and that can be painfully

fun games

slow going. If you're still following the story after you land on Polysorbate LX, a slumlike planet where you run into the likes of E.T. and Jebba the Hop, you'll eventually

shrink to microscopic dimensions and begin your true mission.

Try as it might. The Spinal Frontier consistently misses the mark. In one scene, for instance, Roger challenges an alien to a game of "Stooge Fighter 3," which puts Larry, Moe and Curly in a Street Fighter arcade setting: They throw pies, tweak noses and poke each other's eyes. But the game is caused; no matter what you do, you can't win the first round and you can't lose the second.

Unless you can't get enough of the Space Quest series, Roger Wilco may just get under your skin.

\$49.95 (DOS CD-ROM, Windows CD-ROM) from Sierra On-Line, (800) 757-7707, (206) 649-9800. Circle #470 •



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13 Picture Info



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ArtApart lets you "cut up" pictures into the size and number of pieces of your choice, making it fun for the entire family. Pieces are shaped differently every single time, resulting in endless game variations. No matter how big your monitor is, ArtApart will automatically resize the puzzles for you. With ArtApart, you'll never run out of puzzles!

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We've done it! ArtApart is great fun for kids, and is a real challenge for experienced puzzle fans. It's the kind of puzzle you've been

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Wouldn't it be a ton more fun if kids could actually build and play with electronic gadgets instead of just settling for images on a screen?

Welcome to Cybercrafts Fun With Electronics. The first CD-ROM where virtual reality and hands-on reality come together.

Why is Cybercrafts Fun With Electronics more fun? Because it gives kids more ways to have fun. While they make stuff they can actually use!

MAC & PC CD-ROM

For starters, there's a cast of

wacky characters that take kids through the ins and outs of the on-screen workbench where they'll learn about what makes electricity crackle: conductors, capacitors, transistors, diodes, terminals. The works.

Next, kids move to a real hands-on workbench. Plus a parts department that lets them build and play with 25 amazing projects in all.

Cybercrafts Fun With Electronics.
It starts where other CD-ROMs leave off.

Kids first pop in the CD-ROM for a step-by-step journey through the basic principles of electricity and a how-to on 25 projects. School should be this much fun!



workbench. The real lab version of what kids see in 3-D on screen. Other interactive CDs don't have one. Bummer.

These are the components kids use to build their projects.
(Marconi may have invented the radio. Bet he never had this much fun putting it together.)

FUN WATER



PHILIPS

# LIFESTIES + LEANING BY SHARLENE JOHNSON AND CHARLES BOWEN

# Julia Child's digital kitchen: 16 chefs dish out generous helpings

hen Julia Child speaks, food lovers listen. Indeed, as soon as that unmistakable voice welcomes us to her new CD-ROM, Home Cooking with Master Chefs, she's got our attention. And, happy to say, her first software menu doesn't disappoint. With 16 top American chefs joining in, PBS's gonrmet gurn serves up a cooking guide of excellent taste.

From the first month-watering eolor photos, you can tell this presentation's going to have all the trimmings—there's not a plain white window in sight. The recipes include a few down-home favorites, such as Old-fashioned Mashed Potatoes, but most of the 100 or so entrées, side dishes and desserts are clearly meant for special occasions; unless you have the energy to tackle Shrimp Étouffée or Seared Venison with Pinot Noir and Cherries before the evening news, this isn't the program to eonsult for everyday family dinner suggestions.

Yet, faney fare aside, the style is pleasantly down-to-earth. Complex dishes are explained with narrated video or slide shows, and the real meat of the program—a treasure trove of tips and techniques—will come in handy for even the most casual eook; every section contains useful, practical information.

For instance, you might think the photos and biographies in the Chefs area would be little more than self-promotion for America's cooking

elite, but they offer practical advice that resonates with the voice of experience. When Susan Feniger, coowner of the Border Crill in Santa Moniea, Calif., explains how she squeezes eitrus fruits without a juicer, her elever, simple technique

**\*\*** 

Julia Child:

Home Cooking

with Master

Chefs

shows that in the kitchen, ingenuity can be just as valuable as fad gadgetry.

In each recipe, you'll see terms, utensil names and ingredients highlighted in red; elick on them to

eall up a photo and background information—handy if you've never heard of, say, a "degreasing pitcher" (sometimes called a gravy separator, it's a plastic or glass cup with a long spout that pours only from the lower liquid layer, leaving the fat untouched at the top.). Similarly, small red T's sprinkled throughout the recipes are keyed to additional juicy tidbits of information.

The one disappointment here is that there's little footage of Child in action—the "tours" of Julia's Kitchen rely on clickable photos of various kitchen and pantry items, with just a sprinkling of video. Still, this section, too, is stocked with information, including a list of the cooking utensils Child considers indispensable, and tips on selecting the freshest ingredients, sharpening knives and serving wine.

Of course, not even Julia Child ean prepare a chef to make gourmet meals overnight. So come back for seconds—and linger for hours. You'll savor every byte. —S.J.

\$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Microsoft, (800) 426-9400, (206) 882-8080. Circle #471

#### The gridiron age

ou think quarterbacks take a lot of shots on the football field? Consider photographers: From the earliest days of the pro-game in the 1920s, they've



Who says too many cooks spoil the broth? Julia and friends fill a software menu from soup to puts.

captured all the passes, runs and tackles on film. 75 Seasons: The History of the NFL takes those action-packed photos, adds in statistics galore and hands it all off to

75 Seasons:

the NFL

Football

fans on one winning disc.

kicks off with The History of black-and-white. grainy newsreel films from the 1920s and '30s. then traces the league's develop-

ment right up to today's stunning full-color, slow-motion television footage. All the legends of the game appear in text, audio and

along with the records of teams and players. The names mean almost as much to our cultural history as they do to the sport The program itself: Joe Namath, Jim Brown, Joe

Montana—and, yes, O.J. Simpson. The program's history lessons are solid: Starting with the roots of

more than an hour

of narrated video.



the NFL (which began as the American Professional Football Association in the early '20s), the disc covers every team to compete in the league, observations about coaching innovatious over sevenand-a-half decades, rules changes, the public's growing fascination with the sport, and the impact of television on its boom.

But the program scores best with its wonderful video library of football's greatest moments. Over and over, you can watch Tom Dempsey kick the longest field goal

lifestyles

in NFL history (63 vards) or see Walter Payton break the all-time record for rushing yardage.

If you're a die-hard football fan, this disc is a natural; if you just want to be able to communicate with someone who is, it does a coaching job that would make Don Shula proud. -C.B.

\$34.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from RealTime Sports, (800) 554-4420, (212) 395-9800. Circle #472

#### Take a rain check? It depends on you...

rom identifying cirrus clouds to predicting tornadoes, the Everything Weather CD-ROM from The Weather Channel offers a fine climate for learning about stormy weather.

Meteorological mavens know that when it rains, most of us pre-



fer to be on the inside looking out, so the disc's homey design protects users from nasty elements. It offers easy access to

#### **Playing Dom?**

A Julia Child cooking CD-ROM makes sense, but Dom De-Luise? If you ques-



tion the value of **Cooking With Dom** DeLuise—Fun. Fast & Healthy, just take his pal Burt Reynolds' word for it: "[Dom's] recipes are fantastic. [He] is Julia Child in drag."



The outlook in Everything Weather is warm and sunny, but there's always a chance of storms.

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THE WINNING SECRET a fact, all the sit-ups in the world will not you awesome abs. The BodyCraft software ram is normally \$59.95--but now you can tine it free. You need BodyCraft because certain exercises and a proper meal-plan, fully prepared in a scientific manner can er washboard abs.

"I followed the printouts for 33 days to get these results. - Oren David, Newark, Delaware

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eaptured all the passes, runs and tackles on film. 75 Seasons: The History of the NFL takes those aetion-packed photos, adds in statisties galore and hands it all off to

fans on one winning dise.

75 Seasons: The History of the NFL

Football

The program kicks off with black-and-white, grainy newsreel films from

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The program's history lessons are solid. Starting with the roots of

lifestyles + learning

in NFL history (63 yards) or see Walter Payton break the all-time record for rushing yardage.

If you're a die-hard football fan, this dise is a natural; if you just want to be able to communicate with someone who is, it does a coaching job that would make Don Shula proud. —*C.B.* 

This is the only software program that can (and will!) make you more healthy, more sexy, more incredible looking than you ever thought possible...READ ON!

#### **Playing Dom?**

A Julia Child cook ing CD-ROM make sense, but Dom De Luise? If you ques



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Cooking With Don
DeLuise—Fun, Fas
& Healthy, just tak
his pal Burt
Reynolds' word for
it: "[Dom's] recipes
are fantastic. [He]
Julia Child in drag

### **BodyCraft Software**

Personalized day-by-day printouts to build washboard abs.

BodyCraft delivers AWESOME results in just 35 days...



Oren David, Newark, Delaware

When it came, I used it. I followed the plans to the letter. They were easy to follow. I started "cutting up" in the first 2 weeks. At the end of week 4 (day 33), I had these abs. Without BodyCraft my chances of getting a body like this were zero. Using BodyCraft was easy and fun.



Kelly Burks, St. Augustine, Florida

My name is Kelly. Everyone has always told me I was pretty...but I was still insecure because of my body. My brother printed me a plan with the BodyCraft software and I followed it. My bodyfat dropped from 20% down to 14%(and it's still dropping)! Now other girls ask me for advice! I wouldn't know what to tell them...except to follow the BodyCraft printouts!



BodyCraft

Greg Boutoures, San Diego, California

I endorse this program. It is a cut and dried solution to getting Washboard Abs. *This is a big package with everything you need...* Amazing software, 3 illustrated manuals written by Dr. Hatfield and step-by-step printed plans...BodyCraft will work for you!

# **Build Washboard Abs**

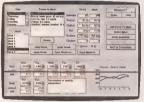
#### **New BodyCraft Software Delivers On Promises**

Computer generated plans deliver washboard abs with a lot less effort and a lot more fun!

TRY IT BEFORE YOU PAY A CENT. We want you to get results, and if you don't get them, we don't want your money.

Done exactly as specified the BodyCraft Software program will cut-up your abs so fast you won't believe it. You'll burn 2.2 pounds of fat off your waistline per week-while building abdominal muscle. You'll see immediate results--Guaranteed.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE: No book or video can give what BodyCraft Software gives you--Personalized Printed Plans to



follow. Nothing to study. Washboard Abs Fast, Easy & Fun. 100% Foolproof. You cannot cheat this program. Just follow the step-by-step meal-plans and workout plans for 100% guaranteed success.

#### HOW DOES IT WORK?

The awesome power of WINDOWS allows you to achieve complete muscle definition! The fastest route possible to "amazing abs" are computed and graphed. The easiest exercises, the easiest diet. BodyCraft automatically calculates your meal-plans and your 9-minute It couldn't be easier. With this workout and diet, nothing can stop you from succeeding.

#### STRIP 2.2 LBS OF MID-SECTION FAT PER WEEK--**BURN OFF 8.8 LBS IN 31 DAYS!**

BodyCraft Software is a "workout & diet" brain and is the permanent answer to guesswork. When you use BodyCraft Software you don't think--You just do the exercises and eat the foods. The results -- washboard BodyCraft Software uses proven mathematical formulas to create a personal workout and diet--100% foolproof and guaranteed! For every meal, a printed meal plan. For every week, a printed grocery list. For every workout, a printed exercise chart. Do the workout



BodyCraft Software has been featured in dozens of magazines! Everyone loves it!



BodyCraft Software delivers "computer generated" plans for you to build your own washboard abs!

portion at home or at the gym in 9 minutes. All exercises explained in exacting detail...and best of all--No Sit Ups. With your master-plan in hand, YOU CANNOT FAIL. Imagine being on the way to the perfect body--as soon as you call in for BodyCraft Software.

No major changes in your life needed. You do not need to join a health club. Ab exercises can be done at home.

#### THIS PROGRAM IS SO SIMPLE

Try this software. It will bring you washboard abs.

The meal-plan and exercises cannot harm you. They are proven safe. If the software succeeds, you will have sexy, washboard abs. fails...you have bought nothing.

WE WILL TAKE A CHANCE ON

WE TRUST YOU... trust you will follow the





program exactly--for it is easy to follow and requires no great effort or sacrifice on your part.

Call. Examine this software. The program is yours free to try out NOW! If you develop washboard abs, or are well on your way--you

> Software. BodyCraft Decide now to try it and you could start tomorrow. We BodyCraft via **3)** Overnight Airborne Express. WE ARE DEPENDING WASHBOARD ABS. So, if you get off track--Call Us! You can call for free tech

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Science... The average bodybuilder goes from "fat" to "contest ready" in just 39 days. The method they use can be used by anyone... male or female... their simple method will be used by you to lose as much fat as you want ... and to build washboard abs - FAST!

#### Here's how to get your copy:

- 1. Call 800-850-3777
- 2. Ask for BodyCraft Fast-Abs
- 3. Pay \$4.95 for Overnight Deliv. (Canada & Overseas require additional postage)

#### THE WINNING SECRET

It is a fact, all the sit-ups in the world will not give you awesome abs. The BodyCraft software program is normally \$59.95--but now you can examine it free. You need BodyCraft because only certain exercises and a proper meal-plan, carefully prepared in a scientific manner can deliver washboard abs.



"I followed the printouts for 33 days to get these results."

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each section, including U.S. and Global Climate Data books, a Help Manual and a magnifying glass to start a search.

Although the window shows blue skies "outside." tornadoes. thunderstorms, hurricanes and winter storms rage inside a snow globe on your desktop; buttons on its base call up detailed information on each type of storm. The sections are interesting, if not terribly useful. Photos, text and videos offer insight for the curious. including footage of some of history's most vicious storms. The impact is somewhat clouded, though, because you can't see photos and read text at the same time, and the disc's video clips are plagued by poor visibility.

The interactive activities, such as the Name That Cloud game, won't challenge Doom for thrills. And while a Forecast Connection lets you download current condi-

tions and forecasts for 200 cities worldwide at 75 cents per call, don't expect much detail: A typi-

cal report includes high and low temperatures and a general statement such as "Partly cloudy." Your local paper could probably tell you that. —S.J.

\$50 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM due next month) from The Weather Channel, (800) 633-2222, (404) 801-2102. Circle #473

## Scanning English with a define-tooth comb

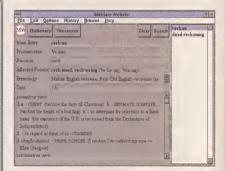
oday's kids may grow up believing that a dictionary is nothing more than the spellcheeker in their word processor. As this delightful CD-ROM shows, a

#### lifestyles + learning

dictionary ean be much richer than that, with definitions, histories and derivations, pronun-

ciations, grammatical forms, and syntactical and idiomatic clues.

True, there's little flash in this disc; it forgoes videos, sound clips



and colorful graphics for solid information—and plenty of it. Merriam-

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary and Collegiate Thesaurus (both contained on a single CD-ROM) pack more than 160,000 entries, plus 130,000 antonyms, idioms, related words and comparisons of usage. A utility called M-W Link

Webster's
Collegiate
Dictionary and
Collegiate
Thesaurus

Reference,
writing

★ ★ 1/2

Merriam-

even lets you check on words in other Windows applications.

The software enables fast, powerful searches if you install it all on your hard drive—but you'll need 28 megabytes of space to do so; as little as 2 MB will let you run the program from the disc itself. —C.B.

\$69.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Merriam-Webster, (\$00) 201-5029, (413) 734-3134, Circle #474

#### Catch-as-catch-Kanji

ong winter evenings lend themselves to study—so what better time to satisfy a yen to learn lapanese? You'll need all the time you can get to master the fundamentals of reading and writing this complex language. But two new software

#### Are forecasts all wet? Check the Web

ong before meteorologists put computer power to work in forecasting the weather, *The Old Farmer's Almanac* was watching the skies. The 1996 edition still makes its calls using a "secret formula devised in 1792." The difference now is that readers can use their computers to take advantage of the *Almanac*'s old-fashioned wisdom.

Earlier this year, the *Almanac* launched a page on the Internet's World Wide Web (*http://www.nj.com/weather*), where you'll find a series of two-to five-day forecasts of general conditions such as "Clear, seasonable" or "Rain, cool." for which the

Almanac claims an average accuracy rating of 30 percent. For the days of Oct. 3-6 in the New York area, its prediction of "Sunny, warm" was right on—for Oct. 3; the next two days it rained. (Although the lead page focuses on the Northeast, you can see round-the-clock, hourly updates on the weather in 25 U.S. cities.)

Happily, the interactive section of the *Almanac* on the Web retains some of the homespun touch that's so identified with its print edition. After all, can you imagine

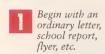
asking the National Weather Service (which is also on-line, at <a href="http://www.nws.noaa.gov/">http://www.nws.noaa.gov/</a>) how to get rid of bugs in houseplants? ("Push a clove of garlic into the plant's soil," if you're interested.) That was a Question of the Day chosen by the <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/j.nc.noa.gov/">Almanac editors—they answer one a day. tackling anything from history to, of course, the weather. —Steven Korn



# This is easy.

My Little Sister by Douglas Hayes Mrs. Siegel, 4th grade

My sixter Mebisa it two and 1/2 years old, She was born September 1, 1993 in Denver. CO. At preschool every morning she panto, plays and sings songs. I moght her how to climb the jungle gyru and now the can go all the way to the top!

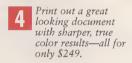




My Little Sister

by Douglas Hayes Mrs. Siegel, 4th grade

My sister Melissa is two and 1/2 years old. She was born September 1, 1993 in Denver, CO. At preschool every morning she paints, plays and sings songs. I taught her how to climb the jungle gym and now she can go all the way to the top! You can see from the photo that she is very brave.





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EasyPhoto Reader

The easiest way to get your photos into a computer!

"The results are nothing short of stunning."

PC Magazine

#### **Bob hopeless?**

emember Bob, the "hard-working, easy-going soft-ware everyone will use"? No? Judging by the lack of attention paid to the Microsoft "social interface" in recent months, we can forgive the lapse. After an initial sales burst at the program's launch last March, Bob hasn't exactly made himself at home with many software buyers.

According to PC Data, the software sales-tracking firm in Reston, Va., only about 20,000 copies of Bob were sold in its first five



months. (Microsoft's Encarta sold nearly 85,000 units during the same period.)

But Microsoft claims to be standing by its man. As a bonus, the software now ships with Great Greetings, a program designed to let you send cards and invitations directly from your computer; other addon lures are also available. Still, when you ask folks at Microsoft headquarters to put on a happy interface, odds are it'll be Windows 95. —Keith Kirkpatrick

programs can at least make it easier for you to get started.

To fully understand the Japanese

language, you must first learn the two styles of Kana—written phonetic characters, each representing a syllable. These are covered by the Kana-



kun program. But you'll also need to study Kanji characters, which represent whole words (sometimes several at once); Volume 1 of the

Kantaro software, the first in a planned series, covers 200 of the 2,000 or so Kanji characters that are currently in use.



Luckily, learning the software isn't nearly as complicated as learning the language; both programs use a simple, button-driven interface sprinkled with a few pull-down menus.

The first group of Kana lessons explains how to recognize each Kana by its strokes and pronunciation. You'll find a matching game, a flash-card-like section, and Kana Writer, which lets you view a stroke-by-stroke animation of each



character, hear it pronounced and then practice drawing it yourself (you'll be better off doing

this on paper than trying it with your mouse). The next set of lessons includes several exercises that teach you to form words.

Once you progress to Kantaro (probably a matter of days, not months), you'll find the Discoverer module, in which picture and word mnemonics teach you to quickly recognize and remember basic Kanji definitions.

While the programs do a good job of teaching beginning Japanese, they're also simplistic, with tedious elevator music and silly sound effects. And although the combination of Kana-kun and Kantaro will get you off to a good start, the grammar, etiquette, subtle nuances and complete vocabulary of the language aren't covered here. For that, perhaps you'll have to wait for the sun to rise on an-

\$59, Kana-kun; \$129, Kantaro, Vol. 1 (Windows CD-ROM) from Pacific Software Publishing, (800) 232-3989, (206) 562-1224. Circle #475

other long, cold winter. —S.J.

## Parks guide may test your better nature

f it's never too soon to start planning a summer vacation, Tour of USA National Parks, which offers detailed text and a top-notch search feature, can plant some ideas in your head. Unfortunately,



Tour of USA National Parks gives you only an occasional peak at the pretty scenery.



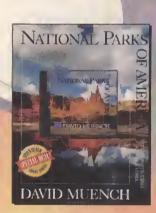
# Make the most of your home...

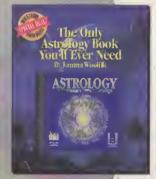


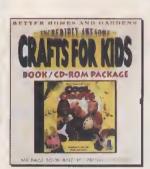




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the disc will disappoint anyone expecting visually enticing tours of our majestic national resources.

For those interested in visiting one of the 20 well-known sites covered in the Armchair Visits section, detailed text descriptions are clear, concise and informative,

1/2
Tour of USA
National Parks

Travel

with useful tips and details. You can also conduct searches to find campgrounds all across the United States.

But otherwise, only the barest descriptions will come up for the country's remaining parks, historic sites and national monuments. And while the disc calls itself "multimedia," the small photos rarely convey the subjects' grandeur, and the video clips and audio narration are scant.

The biggest problem, however, isn't so much the superficial content as your route to it. Reading through the text, you see the words "Click here to see picture," "Click

here for audio" or "Click here to view video." The result is annoying and tedious, a process

that's just no picnic to use. —S.J.

\$9.99 (Windows CD-ROM) from CDRP, (617) 494-5330. Circle #476

#### Renaissance man

o remember Leonardo da Vinci only as an artist—even one who created such singular masterpieces as the Mona Lisa—is to do a disservice to one of history's greatest thinkers. Intent on blending science and art, Leonardo was a lifelong student of nature who filled his journals with observations, dreams, conjectures and conclusions about the world around him, as well as sketches and notes for scores of mechanical devices. Half a millennium ahead of his time, Leonardo predicted such developments as

lifestyles + learning

the drawbridge, an armored tank and a diving suit.

Certainly, Leonardo would have

been fascinated by the CD-ROM, which can store almost as much information as his nimble mind did. Leonardo, the Inventor brings to the screen a variety of sketches from the original journals for a detailed look at nearly two dozen inventions. Some are humorous in



retrospect; for instance, Leonardo believed his "walking buoys" would let a person hike across a body of water. But many are remarkably astute, such as his plans for the para-



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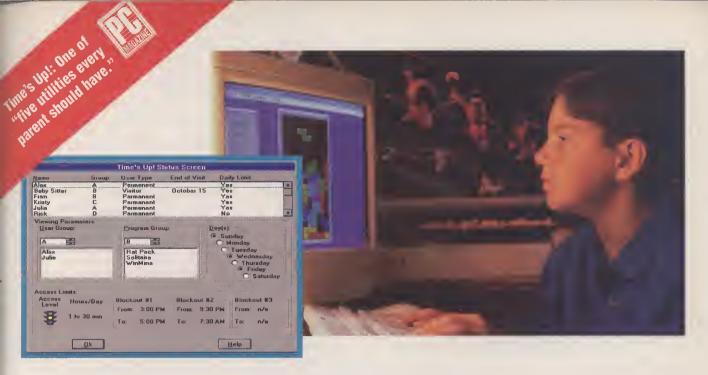
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Time's Up! gently reminds them two minutes before their

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playing when the time limit expires, Time's Up! exits the child from the game and restricts the child's access to that game and

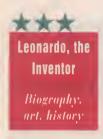
At any time, parents can view and print a report which details the applications each family member has used and how long

TIME'S DÎUP!"

by The Fresh Software Company 2100 Salzedo Street, Suite 300, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

TICK TOCK TICK TOCK TICK TOCK TICK

Quote and logo reprinted from PC Magazine, September 26th, 1995, and used with permission of Ziff-Davis Publishing Co.



chute and the helicopter.

Three-dimensional animation attempts to demonstrate some of the machines Leonardo envisioned in action,

but these drawings don't really do them justice. Still, like the master's own work, Leonardo, the Inventor usually has the right idea. —*C.B.* 

\$49.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Future Vision Multimedia, (800) 472-8777, (914) 426-0400. Circle #477

## Past times, but not much fun

istory is a popular topic for CD-ROM publishers, which display a seemingly endless ability to create new discs devoted to old news. Unfortunately, many

of their efforts end up delivering more dazzle than depth. Compton's Encyclopedia of American

History sets out to right the balance with a huge stockpile of facts. Need the complete text of the Mayflower Compact? It's here. How about the Equal Rights Amendment? Or the Declaration of War on Japan in World War II? The program contains the full text of more than 300 historic documents, and serves up all 32 chapters of McGraw-Hill's college-level text, American History: A Survey.

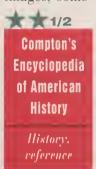
But such encyclopedic entries



#### lifestyles + learning

exact a price for the viewer. It's one thing to have too much multimedia in a serious reference work;

it's another problem altogether to have too little. Granted, the text contains links to more than 3,000 images, some 12 hours of audio



and video clips, and 60 historical maps. But it just isn't as flashy as other recent releases from this publisher; the 1996 edition of the Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia, for instance, does a

far better job at finding a happy mcdium between inspiration and information. —*C.B.* 

\$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from Compton's NewMedia, (800) 284-2045, (619) 929-2500. Circle #478 •

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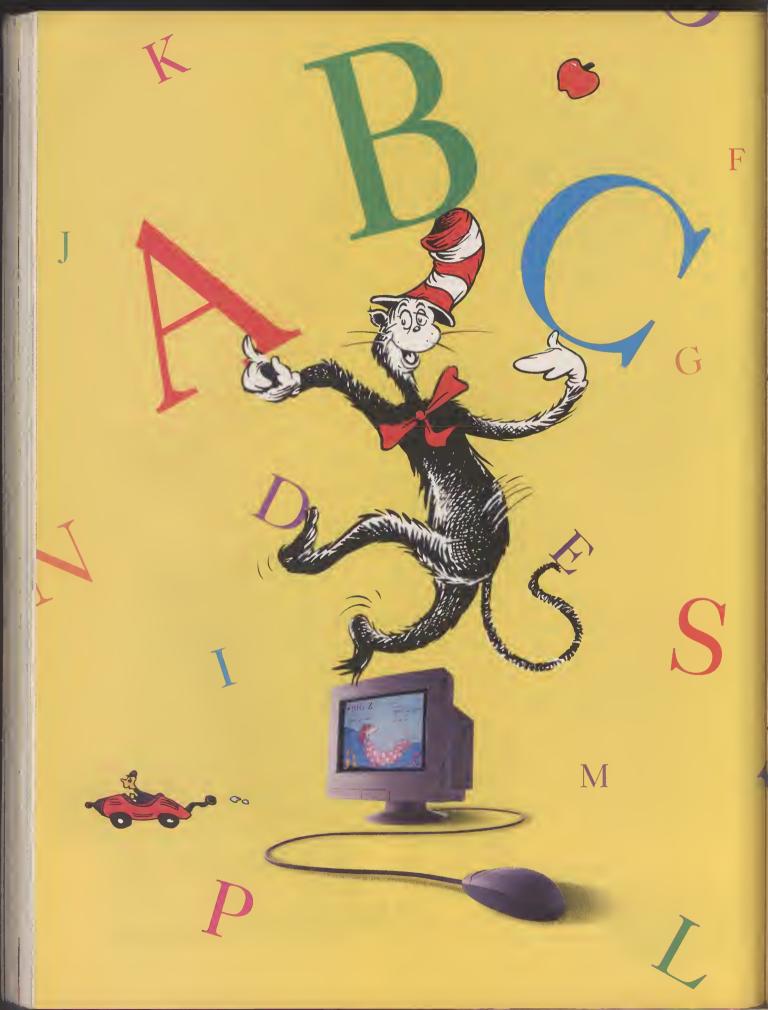
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The interactive software stories.

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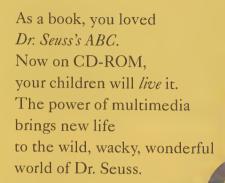
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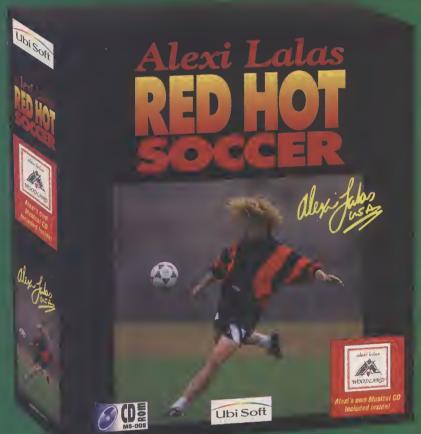
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# kid

**OUR YOUNG EXPERTS RATE SOFTWARE** 

Sesame Street:

Let's Make

a Word/

Letters/

Numbers

# raves

BY CAROL ELLISON

#### In interactive games, Sesame Street opens to two-way traffic

hat's where Bert and Ernie live!" 9-year-old Vietoria squealed with delight when her younger brother, Joseph, elieked on the door to drop in on Sesame Street's dynamie duo.

"Jo-Jo, what do you want to play, the radio or the Shape-a-Matie game?" she asked, considering the choice of games offered by their gracious hosts.

"I want to play it by myself," Joseph, 6, insisted.

Not much chance of that. All the young testers in the *HomePC* Kids' Lab eagerly crowded around the mouse and jockeyed for position to get a crack at Sesame Street Letters, one of three new software programs drawing on the characters and techniques that made *Sesame Street* such a landmark in children's television. Letters and Let's Make a Word, sold separately, provide a hearty introduction to letter and word-building skills; the third program. Numbers, introduces kids to counting and simple math.

In Let's Make a Word, kids ean invite Big Bird, Osear the Grouch or one of four other Sesame Street pals on a game-show set to go to a "remote" location: a farm, a park, a restaurant or a construction site. When they arrive, the character leads them in letter and sound games full of entertaining surprises.

At the farm, for instance, Big Bird may ask the kids to find something that begins with B; if they eliek on the barn, a pig races into the silo, then shoots into the air as if he were in a rocket. When players choose a bale of straw, Big Bird reminds them that "Straw begins with the sound *strrr*."

In the Letters and Numbers pro-

grams, kids elick on the doors of Sesame Street apartments to see what their PC playmates are up to: They'll find a sound and letter game in Snuffalupagus's cave, for instance, and Big Bird itehing to join them for a rhyming game.

Joseph chose

to play Shape-a-Matic with Bert and Ernie. He clicked on everything in their house, turning each object into a square, then a triangle, then a circle. After each click, Bert or Ernie announced, "It's shaped like a square!" (or "triangle!" or "circle!"). Amused, Joseph clicked on Bert himself—but before the characters could speak, Joseph announced, "Bert, you're a triangle! Now I'm going to turn you into a square."

"Did you have fun with Bert and Ernie?" the narrator inquired as Joseph clicked the door to leave.

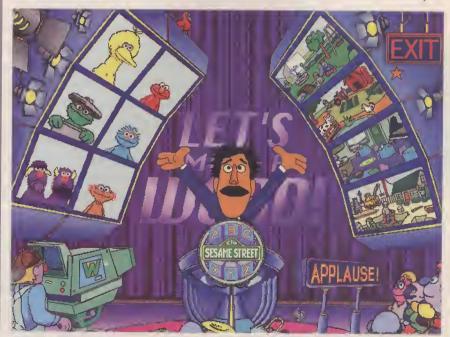
"Yeaaahhh!" he exclaimed. As if anyone really had to ask...

\$39.95 (various CD-ROM formats) from Creative Wonders, (800) 245-4525, (415) 572-2787. Circle #525

#### **Friendly ghost stories**

t's debatable whether Casper: Brainy Book really helps kids bnild the 1,500-word voeabulary it promises—that's a tall order for any book or software program. And when the disc's puzzles, match game and word game count character names like "Uncle Stinkie" among its voeabulary list, it seems the program's more apt to prepare a child for Wheel of Fortune than school.

Still, the kids who played with the Casper disc found it to be spir-



On Let's Make a Word, kids choose a celebrity partner, pick a site and go tor valuable surprises.

ited fun. Brainy Book borrows its plot (but no video) from last summer's hit movie Casper: Kat and her

ghost-chasing father, Dr. Harvey, move into old Whipstaff Manor to determine if it's haunted. It is—by Casper and his three wacky uncles, Stretch, Fatso and Stinkic.

The story unfolds on 12 electronic pages, each of which invites

Casper:
Brainy Book
Ages 4 to 8
Storybook

kids into enchanted rooms where columns morph into hourglasses filled with goo, and statues come alive to dance the hula. Whenever one of the uncles floats

in, kids can click on him to launch a goofy game.

"Ooooh. What was that?" asked Laura, 6, when she clicked on a pillar.

kid raves

"I don't want to know," replied her sister, Cara, 10. "Some kind of gunk."

Four-year-old Kyle plugged his fingers into his ears when the ghosts appeared, because, he said with a shiver. "I don't want to hear them say 'Boo!"



But most of the children in the *HomePC* Kids' Lab made the program a frequent haunt.

"It's my favorite!" declared Rudy, 4, as he returned to Casper for the third time in a row.

"Is it scary?" Laura's mother asked her daughter.

"Nooooo," Laura said knowingly. "This is fun!"

\$29,95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Knowledge Adventure, (800) 542-4240, (\$18) 542-4200, Circle #526

# Fond memories, but Etch-A-Sketch draws a blank on the PC

ool. Cool. Cool." That's all 6-year-old Laura could say as slic waited to play with Etch-A-Sketch. And indeed, what's cooler than a toy that lets kids coax line drawings seemingly out of nowhere with a couple of twists of the wrist?

There was one big difference for Laura, though: She was waiting

#### Inside the Kids' Lab: Software that takes the right coarse

et's face it: From a kid's point of view, adults just don't know what's funny. We grown-ups blush at belches instead of giggling, and we're more likely to clean up gross and slimy spills than appreciate their goofiness. After more than a year of working with dozens of youngsters in the *HomePC* Kids' Lab, we've accepted the obvious: Children are tickled by things we'll never understand.

This month, the kids aped Jay Alexander's shrieky voice in Learn the Art of Magic endlessly—never mind that it sounded like fingernails on a blackboard to any adult



within earshot. Goo dripping through an hourglass in Casper: Brainy Book clicked marvelously with kids at the mouse, while snakes drew snickers in Kiyeko and the Lost Night. And players preferred punctuating scripts in Hollywood with noxious noises to periods and commas.

But adults shouldn't dismiss software as frivolous just because it uses broad humor. Such elements often have a serious purpose: to engage kids who would otherwise tune out the lessons at hand. Spontaneous animation and gross sound effects can spell the difference

between pretty good software and really great software if it keeps kids involved.

Take it from the experts: the kids themselves. We do, and we extend hearty thanks to those who worked—and played—to produce this month's reviews: Gabriel Ayache, Joseph and Victoria Baston, Laura and Cara Forte, Diana Garber, Jennifer Garber, Abbe Goldberg, Benjamin Herman, Alex Hyman, Lauren Mahon, Jason Marder, Kyle Melnick, Janine Ramaden, Lauren Spoto, Rudy Sulamonte, Thomas Volpe and David Wasley. Thanks also to Kids' Lab assistant Karen Garber, teacher Yolanda Callendar, and Ann Erbes, director of CMP Publications' Child Care Center. —C.E.



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Babe: A Little Pig Goes A Long Way; TM & © 1995 U.C.S. Little Rascals; © 1995 U.C.S. & Amblin TM, King World.

not for the familiar plastic toy, but for the PC version—and unfortunately, Etch-A-Sketch's transition

seems a little rough around the edges. The old Etch-A-Sketch works because of its simplicity—but simplicity hinders the multi-

media version.



Laura's enthusiasm waned after she'd played the six games offered in the program, each of which is displayed within the familiar

Etch-A-Sketch frame and has as many as four variations. Kids can create their own designs, trace coloring book images, draw their way through mazes, and construct buildings and scenes by clicking on the two "knobs" in the bottom corners of the frame. Although the program's got plenty of activities, there's none of the clip art, silly sound effects and magic erasers that kids love in creativity programs.

Some Etch-A-Sketch games are unusually well structured. In a travel game, for instance, players can direct planes and cars to destinations listed on the screen (states, countries and cities) only in a certain order; doing so helps kids learn proper geography.

That said, some of our testers could have used more structure in certain spots. It can take a bit of parental encouragement and supervision to get the kids to use the

program productively.

Laura discovered that negotiating the mazes wasn't challenging at all if she just ignored the path and made a beeline to the finish; nothing in the program required her to find her way through the maze. So instead of guiding her vehicle through



#### kid raves

the labyrinth, she simply cut across the grassy medians. "I win," she declared. "I cheated, Look! I was a

cheater!" That's probably not the kind of creativity the inventors of Etch-A-Sketch had in mind.

\$29.95 (Windows CD-ROM) from Screen Magic, (415) 648-8056. Circle #527

## Jack of all trades, master of none

he box for Jack's House emphasizes the "positive and nurturing, non-violent, aggression-free" content you'll find inside—it is, the manufacturer says. "a game of learning wonder and discovery." And just in case

#### **Learning: 6 TV spin-offs to watch for**

tudies show that kids who grow up around computers spend more time at the keyboard than they do in front of the TV. But of course, television continues to influence all their activities, PC included—and that's not necessarily a bad thing. Computer software based on popular TV shows can spur a child's interest in subjects he or she might otherwise ignore; TV shows based on PC programs can make time spent in front of the tube that much more fun—and educational.



Scholastic's popular educational series, The Magic School Bus (see page 128 in our "Holiday Cift Guide"), invites young computer users to join zany teacher Ms. Frizzle and her students for exciting on-screen adventures. The Sesame Street gang inhabits a number of fun, fact-filled software programs (the latest of which are reviewed on page 411). And The Discovery Channel's hit series about everyone's favorite masticating marine

predators, Shark Week, is dipping into the PC software waters with Sharks! An Interactive Journey (\$49.95, various CD-ROM formats, from The Discovery Channel, 800-762-2189). All three programs let children explore and learn about topics that interest and excite them in a familiar environment.

Now, with the boom in multimedia software, the PC is influencing television, too. Broderbund Software's venerable Carmen Sandiego was one of the first PC programs to be spun off into TV shows. This fall, two new software characters, Hyperman (The Adventures of Hyperman, \$39.95, Windows CD-ROM, from IBM Multimedia Publishing Studio, 800-898-8842) and Madeline (Madeline and the Magnificent Puppet Show, \$39.95, Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM, from Creative Wonders, 800-

543-9778) starred in interactive CD-ROMs just as their shows premiered on Saturday-morning TV.

Steve Bennett is co-author of Kick the TV Habit: 365 TV-Free Activities You Can Do With Your Child.



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#### you didn't get the point, instead of using its "Read Me" file to warn you of the technical glitches you

might find inside, which most such files do, the publisher of Jack's House takes the opportunity to once again declare how dedicated it is to producing a wholesome program for kids—something that literally goes without saying for most every preschool software publisher around.

Thus assured of the program's good intentions, we meet Jack, a lovable boy who invites players to look around his house. Each of its



rooms, and its backyard and garden, holds activities such as drying a duck, dressing paper dolls, counting stars and planets, color-

Jack's House

Ages 2 to 8

ing and playing with the alphabet book.

"C is for caterpillar," said Abbe, 6, as she jumped around in the alphabet

on the screen, found the matching letters and typed them in. "Now where's D? Oh, there it is," she said. "E is for Earth, F is for flower," she said, before concluding, "This is so easy—I'm going back to coloring."

Like a number of children's programs these days, this one tries to be too many things to too many kids. The software says its activities are geared for players agcs 2 to 8, but there are huge differences in skills within that range—many activities will frustrate the youngest users, while others will bore older ones.

In our tests, Jack's House played best with 3- and 4-year-olds. Like Abbe, other 5- and 6-year-olds quickly tired of the

games and showed lack the door.

\$34.95 (Windows, Windows CD-ROM) from

Kids Count, (800) 543-7345, (708) 272-9766. Circle #528

#### **Not for tots**

raves

ith its colorful cartoon graphics, goofy characters and four "rooms" open

for play, Corel's Wild Board Games made a delightful first impression on kids in our Lab.

"It looks like Chuck E. Cheese!" declared 4-year-old Janine.

Unfortunately, looking was about all Janine could do—the game suffers from a grossly unrealistic age rating. Four-year-olds can barely grasp the basics of checkers, much less the strategies required to play the other games on the disc: snakes and ladders, reversi, and chess.

Simple games designed for the tykes are here, but hard to find; they're hidden behind objects, and it takes some serious exploration with the mouse to uncover them. More often, clicking around the screen turns up one of the program's 1,500 animations.

The disc plays best when older brothers and sisters join younger siblings to help puzzle out



the challenges. But as with its predecessor, Wild Card Games (see Kid Raves, August 1995), only one child can play at a time—so any opportunity for social interaction gives



way to a computer opponent neither alive nor very lively.

\$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Corel Sys-

tems, (800) 772-6735, (613) 728-8200. Circle #529

#### Let's do launch

"E is for

Earth, F

flower...

This is so

easy—I'm

going back

to coloring."

*—*∠1*bbe*, *6*,

after a few

minutes in

Jack's House

is for

visiting Hollywood on the PC for the first time, four of our young experts gathered around the computer screen over a storyboard like veteran script doctors. Jennifer, 9, watched as Diana, 13, gave Alex and David, both 10, pointers on how to pick characters and set up special effects.

Within an hour, they'd created J.J., a hippie dog who sat at the front of a classroom, munching on french fries, burping and admonishing the class to "get out your books and start crackin'."

"You win the Academy Award!" Jennifer declared when they clicked to play back their creation and J.J. spoke in a nerdy digitized voice.

Hollywood is a writing program that gives kids tools to create a screen-

play, position any of 11 characters in eight poses, assign them one of 17 emotional "looks," give them any of 11 hobbies, and make them speak in one of 26 voices.

Kids can bring all the settings, characters, props and sound effects together as they write; clicking on any selection incorporates it in-

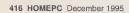
Hollywood

Ages 9 and up

Writing,

to the storyline. And if they get writer's block, the idea starter will spark their imaginations.

"It lets you write whatever you want and the



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Full Throttle" scorches the screen like an exhaust pipe on an exposed leg.

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butt-ugly bikers get the crap kicked out of them in the process, hey, that's life.

It's big bad bikes, big bad gangs in a big bad world. It's Full Throttle.

Where the courtroom is the street, and the judge is a tire iron.

Available now for IBM PC CO-ROM. Coming soon for Mac CO-ROM.

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CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 113



characters will say it,"
Diana explained, "If
you don't like the
character's voice, you
can change that, too,"

But kids in the Lab seemed to like the game best when they



played it in groups, trying to oneup each other with bizarre and imaginative ideas. The hilarity wore off when they played alone.

"The game was fun in the beginning," noted Diana, "especially in the sound-effects and voice department. But the characters said the lines in a monotonous way.

## kid raves

After a while, I got tired of writing scripts and I just played with the special effects."

\$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Theatrix Interactive, (\$00) 955-\$749, (\$10) 658-2800, Circle #530

#### **Illusions** of grandeur

very kid who's ever tried to figure out how his or her favorite uncle makes those quarters disappear or picks the mystery card from the deck every time will be mesmerized by Learn the Art of Magic with Jay Alexander.

"This program teaches you great tricks, and you can watch them being done." said Alex, 10. "It's like a personal magic show at your house."

Not only does the program teach 26 tricks, but some of the bells and whistles—or, more pre-

# Two playrooms become play-ROMs

s Putt-Putt ready to become a big wheel at the arcade? Two centers where kids can play with multimedia software opened this fall: if the owners have their way, they'll serve as models for franchises across the United States.

At the Mid-Pike Plaza in Rockville, Md., Tech Trek opened its doors to kids 3 to 13. For \$6.95

an hour, kids can try more than 300 CD-ROMs in seven play areas revolving around educational themes. Each site has a store where parents can purchase software, and an espresso café that's quickly evolving into a popular site for birthday parties and group outings.

Meanwhile, in Mount Dora, Fla., Cyberplay—developed by Kids Un-

limited—lets kids tackle any of 100 programs, check out the Internet via America Online, or set up a teleconference, all for \$8.95 an hour (parents get in free). The center's futuristic facility was decorated by a set designer from NBC's underwater sci-fi adventure, seaQuest. Each Cyberplay computer station is equipped with a "panic button" kids can push if they need help with the PCs. "But you know, it always seems to be the parents, more than the kids, who push it," said Kids Unlimited president Susan Ray. —C.E.



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cisely, the balls and vase (used in the vanishing ball trick) come with the software. Other sleight of

hand can be performed using ordinary objects, such as a deck of cards, found around the honse.

Kids can watch magician Jay Alexander perform tricks using the magic set that comes with the program, or see him do card, rope,

Learn the Art
of Magic with
Jay Alexander
Ages 8 to 12
Magic tricks

table and money tricks. If they've seen enough of any trick, they can just click to reveal another video and learn the secrets of the illusion.

"It's good," said Gabi, 10.

"They teach you how to do the tricks, and then they show you."

If kids are inspired to stage their own magic show, the program helps them print tickets and fliers. They can also click into a biography section to learn about Houdini and lesser-known magicians such as Chung Ling Soo, who was as illusory as his art (otherwise known as William Robinson, of New York, he performed in Far Eastern garb).

Like the masters before them, kids must pledge not to reveal the

program's secrets—but they sure couldn't hide their glee.

\$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Broderbund Software, (800) 521-6263, (415) 382-4600. Circle #531

# Kids' Internet bill of writes

raves

hat's a parent to do? With all the publicity surrounding the risks of children going on-line on the one hand, and the obvions educational benefits of encouraging them to use e-mail to practice writing on the other, finding a safe way to channel kids' interest in cyberspace can be tough. KidMail Connection is designed to give them access to e-mail while limiting their exposure to other on-

line activities.

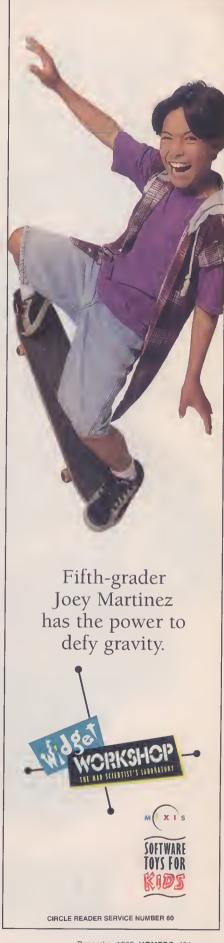
Because of those limits, it wasn't the most popular program among the kids in our Lab, but most of them at least recognized the program's good intentions.

"It allows kids





Just click on the Art of Magic words, and presto! There's the real story of some grand illusions.



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The Source for Prescreened Quality Software For Kids

to use e-mail in a safe way," noted 10vear-old Alex. "It still bothers me that parents have too

much control over their kids' email, though.'

Parents can configure the program to set up a "communications center" from which their children



can send and receive e-mail, leaving other on-line services' features offlimits (the software works with CompuServe, Prodigy and MCI Mail). Kids can choose art and cartoons to decorate their center to reflect one of three popular themes: dinosaurs, space or secret agents.

Tools let them write letters, check mail, keep an address book and send quick prewritten greetings for birthdays and holidays. Parents control their children's online access using a password-protected screen.

The disc does exactly what it says it will, and for parents that may be enough. But the kids had other ideas.

"The program is fun to explore," Alex concluded, "but if you

want a little more adventure, try using the full on-line service."

\$34.95 (Windows CD-ROM), \$29.95 (Windows) from ConnectSoft, (800) 889-3499, (206) 827-6467. Circle #532

#### Snake charmer

raves

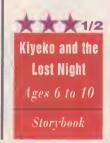
nteractive storybooks have gone multicultural, and the 12-page Kiyeko and the Lost Night tells a tantalizing Amazonian tale: Snakes have conjured up a spell to steal the night, and it's up to young Kiveko and his dad to save it.

The disc is narrated by Academy Award-winning actor Ben Kingsley, and unfolds in 45 minutes of original music and intriguing sound effects. At any time, kids can switch the narration to hear how the words sound

> in French, German, Italian or Spanish.

> "It looks like a movie—it has great animation," said Cara, 10.

As with all interactive storybooks, children





Kiyeko and the Lost Night gives kids the opportunity to hear the story in five languages.





"One of the best to hit the small screen."

**Washington Post Education Review** 

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learn the whole story the first time around. But the kids in the Lab returned to the disc to see their fa-

vorite parts time and again.

"Watch, watch—he turns into a bird," said Joseph, 6, who jumped to his feet, spread his own arms and flapped them feverishly after he clicked on a character in the village who then morphed into a condor.

Kiyeko is the first in a planned series of multicultural interactive stories from Ubi Soft. The second, which will focus on Eskimo life in the Arctic Circle, is due out this winter—and Joseph can't wait.

As Joseph's sister, Victoria, 9, explained it, "He liked it so much, he hated for it to end."

\$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Ubi Soft Entertainment, (415) 332-5011. Circle #533

#### **Not so funnies**

veryone wishes for the company of a superhero now and then, and kids will find 18 of them in Comic Creator, plus more than 100 action scenes, 300 props to decorate them, and a built-in link to the Internet, where children can meet other aspiring comics creators, compare notes and ex-

change their work.

But despite the program's impressive number of effects, it left kids scratching

their heads over a seemingly everscrolling menu bar and lengthy help screens that often didn't help.

raves

"It's called Comic Creator, but it's really complicated to figure out how to create the comics," said 10year-old Cara.

"The help files didn't really tell me how to work with it," complained Gabriel, also 10. "They

1/2

**Comic Creator** 

Ages 9 to 16

Creativity |

just said what each thing did."

After considerable time and effort, the kids in the Lab figured out both how to create comics

and how to structure each frame in a series of cells to build a strip. But features such as editing text after typing it into the word balloons eluded them—not to mention teachers, parents and editors.

After wading through the documentation in an effort to figure out how to change a character's pose, Cara sighed and concluded, "Mostly, it seems like a lot of reading."

\$39.95 (Windows CD-ROM, Macintosh CD-ROM) from Hearst New Media and Technology, (800) 685-4026, (212) 649-2818. Circle #534 •



Looks like the Joke's on kids in Comic Creator: It's hard to change text after it's typed into a scene.



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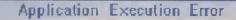






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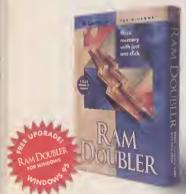


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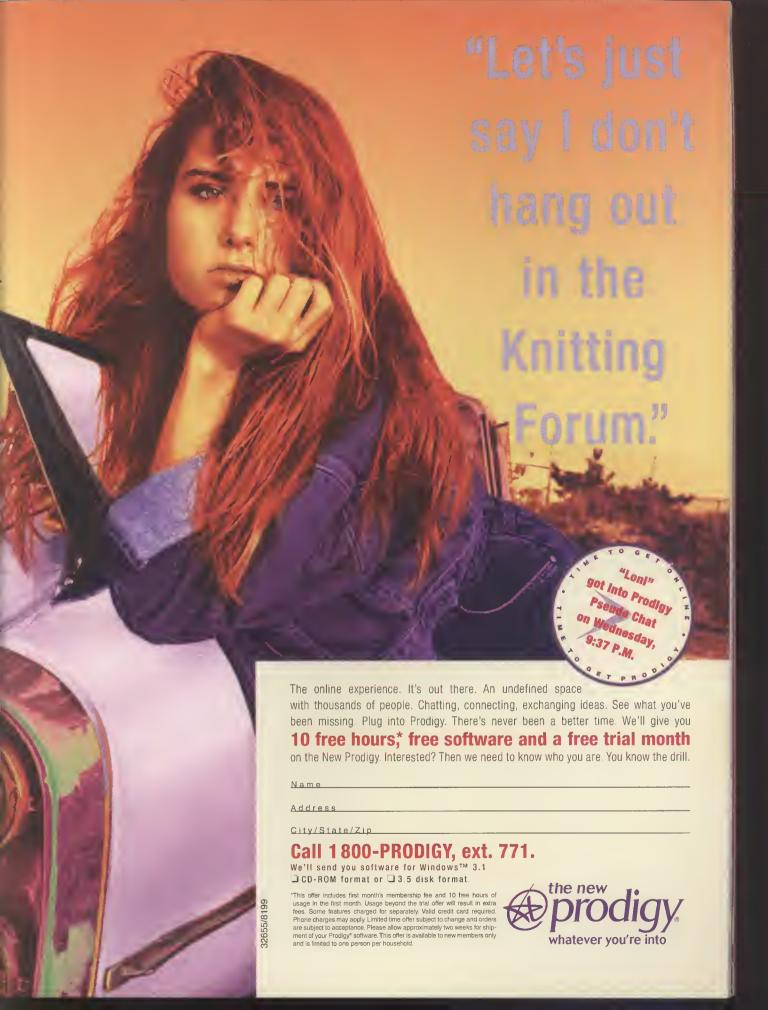
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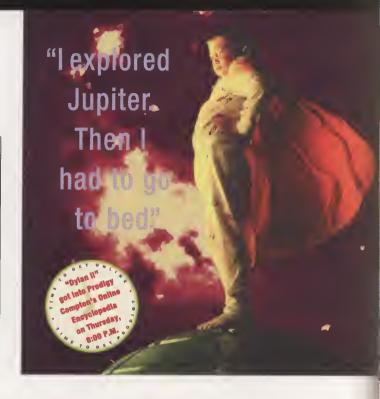


Planets. Rebel Space. The Zodiac. Zoos. Great Apes. Rain Forests. Forecasts. There's a whole universe to be explored. Pack a snack; you've got 10 free hours to start your trip. Who knows what you'll get into?





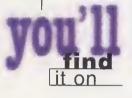
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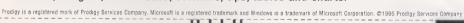
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YOUR GUIDE TO NEW LARDWARE

# geart-gets galle conen

#### Racing to find homeoffice machines? Xerox says take five

f you think you can't assemble a suite of corporate-quality business machines on a home-office budget, think again. Xerox's new Document WorkCenter 250 combines a copier, plain-paper fax machine, PC fax/modem, 300-dpi laser-quality printer and grayscale scanner with an antomatic doenment feeder in a 16-by-18-inch device for \$700.

The WorkCenter 250 smoothly integrates all five of its office functions. It can print faxes as they arrive, or store up to 35 pages in memory for later delivery. Simple front-panel controls and an LCD display let you activate or disable

billing codes; create private, password-protected mailboxes for incoming faxes; define phonebook entrics and groups; and perform other advanced functions.

Transmissions can be delayed or scheduled for a specific time to save on phone charges or reduce telecommunications traffic jams, and legal-

Xerox Document
WorkGenter 250

Printer/
fax/modem/
copier/scanner

size documents can be reduced automatically to fit on a standard 8.5-by-11-inch sheet. The top fax speed is a relatively slow 9,600 bps, but the function is compati-

ble with any Group 3/Class 2 fax machine. And just because it has all the other functions, the WorkCenter doesn't neglect its basic copier duties; the unit gets the job done.

Cramped home office? Document WorkCenter 250 fits five machines in a 16-by-18-inch space.

To use the WorkCenter as a PC peripheral, link it to a Windowsbased computer with standard parallel printer and 9-pin serial cables. In its PC mode, the WorkCenter can direct faxes to the included WinFax Lite fax software, or fax documents directly from within your Windows programs. Faxes and scanned documents can be converted into live text for editing with the Xerox TextBridge 3.1 optical character recognition (OCR) software that comes with the machine, and you can scan documents or photos with up to 64 gray tones.

Perhaps the biggest risk in buying a multifunction device is that one component will fail, taking all the others down with it. But Xerox's free one-year overnight-replacement policy eases that concern. The WorkCenter 250 might not work for people who need a faster, higher-resolution printer or a full-grayscale or color scanner, but otherwise it offers efficiency that's practically compromise-free. —David D. Busch

\$700 (Windows) from Xerox, (800) 275-9376, (716) 423-5090. Circle #518

# PowerPC notebook's a chip off the old block

pple's new PowerBook 5300c gives Power Mac users the speed they crave and the portability they need. A zippy 100-MHz 603e PowerPC microprocessor powers the 5300c, which sports a larger display screen and more opportunities to expand than its predecessors in the PowerBook 500 series.

The model we tested came with 16 megabytes of RAM and a 750-MB hard drive. The 10.4-incli, backlit, active-matrix, 640-by-480 color display is large, sharp and easy on the eyes. The keyboard is comfortable, and Apple includes its usual handy trackpad, which lets you move the cursor with the touch of a finger. Although the Power-Book's case looks boxier than it has in the past, the notebook still weighs a mere 6.4 pounds.

Apple designed the 5300 series

so that you can alter the setup in a number of ways: You can replace the removable floppy-disk drive with another device—say, a second



hard drive. Two PCMCIA slots let you add a modem, networking card or second hard drive. And infrared networking lets you swap files with another PowerBook simply by pointing yours at the other system. (The \$70 AirDoc from Farallon lets you send files to a printer or local area network.)

Yet for all that, the 5300 line still

isn't quite as flexible as it could be. For instance, you can't pull out the built-in hard drive and swap it for one with more capacity. And the

machine lacks the space and power to hold an internal CD-ROM drive—though its SCSI connector lets it run an external drive as well as any desktop or other portable Mac can. Finally, in order to save space and weight, Apple removed the built-in Ethernet networking card, one of the

Apple Power-Book 5300c

Portable computer two stereo speakers, and the optional built-in modem so popular in the Power-Book 500 series. Although the machine has built-in 16-bit, CD-quali-

ty stereo sound, the loss of the second speaker reduces its aural brilliance unless you listen in with a set of headphones.

gadget

One other bit of new teelmology didn't quite make it: Apple literally took some heat recently when it recalled models using lithium-ion bat-

teries (they sometimes caught fire in tests) and substituted a nickel/ metal-hydride version that reduces battery life by about 20 percent. Still, our unit worked for almost three hours. (Apple says it will use the lithium-ion battery design when its defect is fixed.)

The 5300c is a solid machine that takes a great step forward in performance, if not pizzazz. It might not win over many PC users, but Macintosh fans seeking a powerful laptop will snap it up—if they can afford the hefty price. —John Eckhouse

\$4,399, with 16 MB of RAM, 750-MB hard drive and active-matrix color display, from Apple Computer, (800) 538-9696, (408) 996-1010, Circle #519

## **How PCs bite into storage space—and how to get it back**

hese days, most new PCs pack hefty 1-gigabyte (GB) hard drives. But if you expect to stretch out in all that space, you may be in for a surprise: Depending on how the drive is "partitioned," you could have less room than you think. Partitioning a hard drive, which is usually done by the PC manufacturer before the system gets to the store, means assigning the hard drive one or more "logical drive letters" (typically, "C:"), then setting the storage size for each one. Today, most



manufacturers partition hard drives into one large area (that is, drive letter "C:" is sized to encompass the entire hard drive). But this practice can waste as much as a third of your precious hard drive space; in general, the larger the partition size, the more space it will use to store each file. For instance, on the average 540-megabyte (MB) IDE hard drive, a 1-kilobyte (KB) word-processing file will be assigned to a 16-KB storage block, called a "cluster"—leaving the remaining 15 KB to languish. Cluster size doubles on a 1-GB drive with a single partition; the bigger the partition, the bigger the cluster.

To increase usable space on a new drive, you can repartition it. For maximum efficiency, a 1-GB drive should be divided into at least two 500-MB partitions. (Four 250-MB partitions is even better, but you'll have to work with four drive letters—for example, C:, D:, E: and F:—and that can get unwieldy.) You can use DOS's fdisk command, but doing so destroys all data on the drive, so if you choose this option, be sure to back up everything on the drive before you start. Or, try a software solution. Power-Quest's \$69 PartitionMagic (DOS, OS/2) repartitions your hard drive without destroying data—though the company recommends a full backup just in case. —Oliver Rist

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# Telephony card combo has hangups

dding an adapter card to a PC is asking for trouble—and we certainly had our share when we installed the miro-Connect 34 Wave communications card, a telephony and wavetable

miroConnect
34 Wave

Telephony/
sound/
modem card

sound card that has all the right features for the right price: \$299.

The card combines a 28.8-kilobit-per-second fax and data modem—with digital simultaneous

voice and data (DSVD) capabilities—and IBM's Mwave wavetable audio. The technology is state-of-theart: The card's full-duplex phone capabilities mean two people can speak simultaneously—not always a given with telephony cards. To help

you share documents, the card comes with a trial version of Intel's ProShare (it expires 60 days after you install it). Miro's phone-dialing

and voicemail management software, miroConnect, is easy to use, and the sound quality of recorded

messages is top-notch.

Now if only the card were easier. to install. The full-length 16-bit card works with any ISA or VL-Bus-based computer, and it connects to an IDE CD-ROM drive. But don't be fooled by the fact that it has no hardware jumpers—the tiny pieces of plastic that fit over pins to change IRO (interrupt request) settings. It took me many attempts to find the right configuration, as well as excursions into the autoexec.bat and config.sys files to avoid errors. A toll call to the company's technical-support department in San Francisco solved one problem in about 20 minutes (the

gadget

technician knew I was an editor at *HomePC*). But when I called again, at 5:02 p.m. Pacifie Daylight Time, the offices and technical-sup-

port lines were already closed.

Unless you're in the unusual situation of needing to upgrade your modem and sound card at once,



you may be better off remaining unConnected. —J.C.

\$299 (DOS, Windows) from Miro, (800) 249-6476, (415) 855-0940, Circle #520

# For gamers, a step in the right direction

he screaming stock car cuts across your path, jockeying for an inside position on the track. You slam the brake with your left foot to avoid a collision, then deftly downshift and hit the right pedal hard to scoot past the car on the outside. Leaving the turn, you keep the accelerator glued to the floor and speed down the straightaway to take the checkered flag.

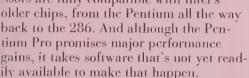
You certainly won't qualify for



the NASCAR circuit, not to mention a pilot's license, by logging hours playing games at your

## Pentium Pro PCs? Not so fast...

Tith the release of the Pentium Pro, Intel's fastest processor yet, you may wonder if the days are already numbered for that speedy Pentium PC on your desk. Not to worry: The new processors are fully compatible with Intel's



The first Pentium Pro chips will run at a blazing 150 MHz, and will incorporate a built-in 256-kilobyte second-level memory cache (a chunk of fast-access memory) in addition to their 16-KB first-level cache.

(The Pentium has only the first-level cache, although adding a 256-KB cache to a PC's motherboard can boost performance.) But unless you use heavy-duty programs—say, 3-D image rendering—you won't need the Pro's power just yet; 16-bit applications—that is, all software designed for Windows 3.1—don't bring out the best in the new chip, which doesn't run such programs any better than a Pentium can.

Intel estimates home computers using the Pentium Pro won't appear until late 1996 or early 1997, when more 32-bit applications (such as those written specifically for Windows 95) will be available. That means you won't have to think about cashing in those Pentium chips for a couple of years yet.—J.C.

# Monitor of the ear.



# PanaMedia<sup>™</sup> Monitors from Panasonic with built-in stereo sound.

Panasonic's new PanaMedia Monitors sound as good as they look. Built-in Dome Speakers™ aimed right at you emanate crisp, clear sound. While a 1,280 X 1,024 maximum resolution NI screen with .27mm Dot Pitch gives you a crisp, clear picture. You don't have to worry about not getting a word in: a built-in microphone lets you talk, making it ideal for video conferencing\*. And all PanaMedia monitors come with additional MN5-HPC

iacks for microphone and headphones, perfect for personal audio applications. Plus, Panasonic's On-Screen adjustment menu allows for instant customized settings. So look for the new PanaMedia 15 and PanaMedia 17 (Viewable Display Area 14" and 16" respectively). You'll find Panasonic has put multimedia sound in its place.

For more information, call 1-800-742-8086.

#### **Panasonic**

Communications & Systems Company

Additional equipment not included with monitor is required for video conferencing capability

CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 76

computer, but CH Products' new foot-pedal game controller will add a satisfying bit of realism to racingand flight-based games. You can activate CH Pedals simply by selecting



Joystick 2 (or B) as a controller for an activity, such as braking or accelerating. An on-screen manual provides step-by-step instructions for configuring many popular games including MechWarrior 2 and Microsoft Flight Simhuator—to work with the pedals.

You'll need plenty of room to stretch out at a comfortable angle, and the rigid side-by-side configuration can be a bit awkward. But you'll forget about that after a few minutes of deft maneuvering—and quickly wonder why you ever relied on a joystick and frantic keyboard strokes in the first place. —D.B.

\$79.95 (DOS, Windows) from CH Products, (800) 624-5804; (619) 598-2518. Civcle #521

#### **Motion slickness**

ideo Artist, a video-capture and -display card, hands you everything you need to add snappy titles, special effects and professional-looking transitions to your PC presentations. The card slips into a free slot in your computer and connects via cable to your camcorder, VCR or other input device. Another cord connects to your VCR or TV for recording or display. If you've ever installed an internal modem or sound card, odds are you'll be able to install Video Artist and its soft-

ware in about 15 minutes.

Then, just turn on your camcorder, choose Capture from the Video Capture—software's

View menu, and record a live scene or transfer images from a tape; you can set the resolution at 320-by-240 or 640-by-480. A Video Editor lets you load, cut and paste clips in two parallel tracks that can be faded, dissolved or "wiped" into one another, while a third track





lets you overlay text, graphics and special effects. A Morph Animation Editor is also included.

Shoppers will find less expen-

sive video-capture cards on the shelves, but they'll be hard-pressed to see higher-quality images or software that's easier to use. One caveat: Reserve plenty of hard drive space; 30 minutes of digitized video takes up nearly a gigabyte of storage. Your best bet is to save your finished productions on videotape rather than on your hard drive, then edit them one short segment at a time. —D.B.

\$389 (Wiudows) from Reveal, (800) 359-2177, (818) 704-6300. Circle #522

# Backup drive's solid, but no major advance

hether you're looking for a quick way to back up all your data, or you need extra space to store mammoth programs or bulky information files,

## **Notebook sales: Compaq steps ahead**

By the end of 1995, shoppers will have purchased 4.16 million notebook computers. Which models are they walking out with most often? Here's a look at the year's top-sellers.

Manufacturer	Model	Unit sales (through 9/95)
Compaq	LTE Elite 4/75CX (active-matrix)	114,864
IBM	ThinkPad 486DX4 (active-matrix)	108,811
Compaq	Contura 400C (passive-matrix)	99,007
NEC	Versa 486DX4 (active-matrix)	89,677
IBM	ThinkPad 486DX4 (passive-matrix)	80,176
Apple	PowerBook 520C (passive-matrix)	77,056
NEC	Versa 486DX2 (passive-matrix)	65,786
Toshiba	T2450CT Satellite Pro (active-matrix)	61,864
NEC	Versa 486DX2 (active-matrix)	58,861

(Source: StoreBoard, September 1995)

# PETER MAKES IT FUN TO EXPLORE THE MEANING OF THERE'S AN ENTIRE TREASURY OF NURSERY RHYMES TO FIND.

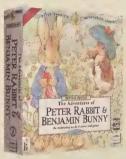
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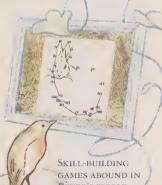


The Adventures of

PETER RABBIT & BENJAMIN BUNNY

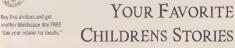






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SyQuest's EZ135 Drive promises to hold your attention. The drive accepts 135-megabyte cartridges, and claims a fast, 13.5-millisecond



seek time as well as a 2.4-megabyte-per-second maximum sustained data-transfer rate. (By comparison, Iomega's \$240 Zip drive uses 100-MB cartridges, has a 29ms seek time and offers a 1.4-MB sustained transfer rate.)

The external SCSI version of the EZ135 we tested worked with large and small word-processing documents comfortably, and it

liandled file backup quickly and smoothly.

Though attractively designed, the external unit is bulkier than the (external) Zip drive.

And if you cau't make it to a gym, you can get a workont lifting its big power adapter. The Zip drive has a hefty adapter, too, but at least lomega gives you an option to buy a smaller one; that's not so for the EZ135. You can choose an internal IDE unit, but we were unimpressed by its confusing, DOS-based installation utility. (SyQnest also plans to have an external parallel-port version available by December.)

In fact, SyQuest might do well



to give more thought to its utility software in general. For instance, on our test computer—a Pentium-based Packard—Bell Legend running

gedi + gadgei:

Windows for Workgroups 3.11—the setup routine created a Sy-Quest Utility program group, yet clicking on its Backup Copy icon

launched a DOS-based backup application that was functional, but far from an ideal solution.

Still, at about \$240 for the drive and \$20 for each cartridge (oue comes with the drive), the EZ135 is a cost-effective solution for anyone who useds either a sensible backup system or more storage space. Although a smaller size and better software would make the EZ135 more appealing, it will do an adequate job for most home computer users just the way it is. —Jeunifer Zaino

\$199.95, internal IDE version (DOS); \$239.95, external SCSI version (DOS, Macintosh); \$239.95, parallel-port version (DOS) from SyQuest Technology, (800) 245-2278, (510) 226-4000. Circle #523

Connectix



# **Shoot the Works.**

QuickCam™ includes all you need to make movies and take pictures with your PC. Plug one cable into your parallel port, install the software and shoot. It's simple. Make training films, video conference, inventory valuables. It's easy to take pictures, too. Add photos to newsletters, documents, reports. QuickCam comes with Movie AVI for Windows, QuickMovie software, QuickFrame templates and QuickPicture image saver. All for around \$100. Your satisfaction is guaranteed. Buy your QuickCam today wherever fine computer products are sold.



System Requirements: A PC equipped with a 386, 486, Pentium or equivalent processor
• Windows 3.1 or 3.11, Windows for Workgroups 3.1 or 3.11 • 4 MB RAM required











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#### **Shoot** to thrill

If nothing else, the Casio QV-10 digital camera will make you the center of attention at your next party. It *looks* like a standard 35-millimeter camera—until you notice the LCD screen that acts as both a viewfinder and a display window, which is sure to draw ooohs and aaahs from all your friends. But that attention doesn't come cheap: The QV-10 costs nearly \$1,000.

If you've got the cash, the camera is great fun. The 1.8-inch LCD screen gives you an excellent preview of what you'll see on your



computer screen—and with its swiveling lens, von can even watch vourself as you snap a self-portrait.

The OV-10 is designed to be virtually idiot-proof. Turn the power on, switch to "rec" mode and start shooting. Focus is



automatie, and the 2-megabyte flash-memory chip can store up to 96 pictures at once. Better yet, it won't wear out: transfer the

images to your computer, and you can then delete them from the camera's memory and start again.

The QV-10 reproduces light about as well as most 35-mm cameras, but it doesn't have a flash: two lighting settings let you adjust for dim and bright light, and the LCD sereen shows you when you're risking over- or underexposure.

Once you've taken your pic-

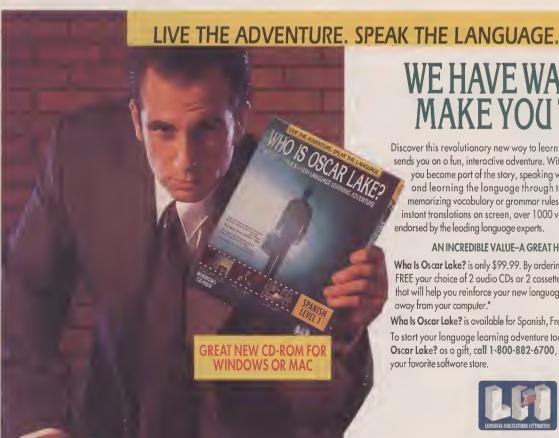


tures, Casio's QV-10 software lets you transfer them from the eamera to the PC in any of three storage formats; .tif, .bmp, and Casio's

own .cam format, which lets you store the pictures as thumbuails in an "album." But pictures can't be exported to an image-editing program such as Adobe PhotoShop in the .cam format, and the Casio software doesn't deliver even rudimentary image-editing features.

You won't get the crispness of a 35-mm print, since the maximum resolution is only 640-by-480. On paper, sharp edges look blocky, and color reproduction depends on your printer. Nevertheless, the Casio OV-10 is one of the niftiest new toys a gadget fan could hope to find in a giftwrapped box. —J.C.

\$995 (Windows, Macintosh) from Casio, (500) 962-2746, (201) 361-5400, Circle #524 •



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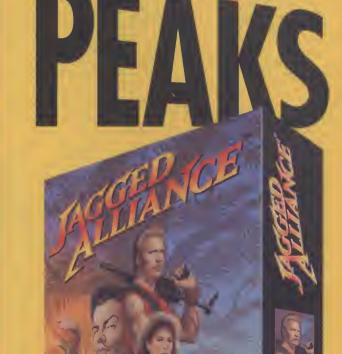
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**Peachtree Accounting for** Windows Release 3.5



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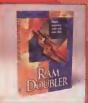
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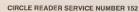












HOMESPECIAL SECTION

ORDAL GUIDA CD-ROM SettingsScanDisk Disk DefragmenterDriveSpace Backup • Compression Agent System Agent

# visual guide to Windows 95

by Ram Tackett



CD-ROM (CONTROL PANEL, SYSTEM)



**SCANDISK** 



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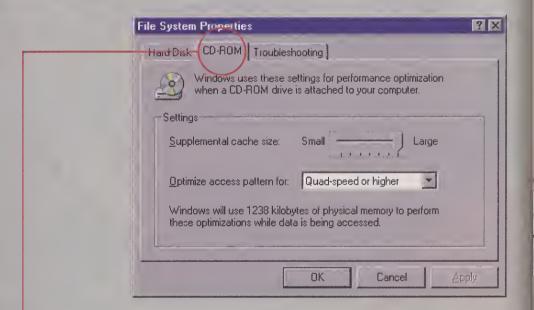
t's tempting to think that an operating system as powerful as Windows 95 could maximize PC performance or keep track of system maintenance without asking you to lift a finger. No such luck. But Windows 95 does include a number of helpful tools you can use to speed up hard drive activity, increase storage space for your files and more.

In this special section—the last of three Visual Guides running in consecutive issues of HomePC—we'll show you how you can make the most of Windows 95's maintenance and productivity features. You'll see how to set options to improve CD-ROM performance, as well as instructions for backing up everything from single files to an entire hard drive. A look at

the Disk Defragmenter will demonstrate what you can do to keep your hard drive performing at top speed.

We'll also introduce you to Windows 95's ScanDisk, which keeps fragments of deleted files from slowing PC performance, and DriveSpace, which increases available storage space without requiring you to splurge on a brand-new hard drive.

Finally, we'll examine two features of the \$49.95 add-on program, Microsoft Plus. First, we'll take a look at the Compression Agent, a handy utility that gives you control over the way the system compresses files. And then our tour ends with the System Agent, which takes a load off your shoulders by automating optimization and system maintenance tasks.



Windows 95 lets you fine-tune a system with at least 8 megabytes (MB) of RAM for better CD-ROM performance. First, go to the File System Properties screen (click on Start, then choose Settings and Control Panel; double-click on the System icon, choose Performance from the System Properties dialog box and click on the File System option). In File System Properties, click on the CD-ROM tab and choose "Quad-speed or higher" from the drop-down menu. This reserves a little more than 1 MB of RAM to "cache" (read ahead) information from your disc; before going to the CD-ROM, Windows will look at the cache to see if the data you want is there. It's faster to pull up information from memory than it is to go to the CD-ROM, so you'll get the response you need more quickly.

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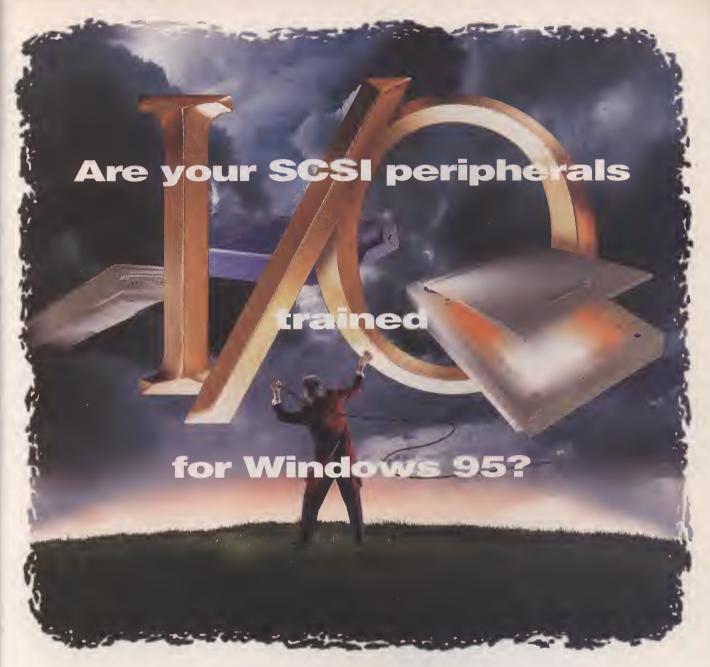
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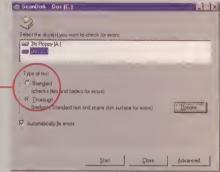
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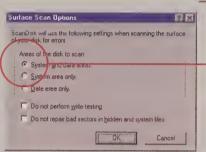


# ScanDisk

anaging the comings and goings of the numerous files on your computer is no easy task, and sometimes Windows 95 falls down on the job. For instance, it may leave pieces of files you think you've deleted lingering on as lost file fragments on your hard disk. Or it may cross-link different files ufter a program crash, assigning them the same space on your disk. That can spell tronble when you try to access data or run programs. Luckily, the built-in ScanDisk utility can free precious disk space tied up by lost fragments, as well as resolve cross-linking errors.

You can perform a Standard or Thorough disk scan. If you're having problems starting programs or booting up your PC, choose Thorough; otherwise, pick Standard. Click on Start, then select Programs. Accessories, System Tools and ScanDisk.

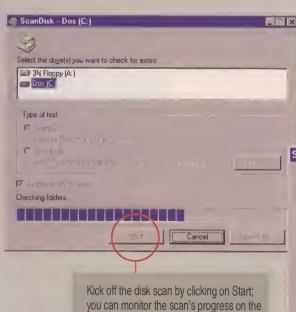




If you pick Thorough, the Options button lets you set test limits. The default checks the system area (the part of your hard disk that tells a PC how to start) and data area (the rest of the disk).

ScanDisk stops leftover fragments of deleted files from gobbling up hard disk space.

The Advanced button in the ScanDisk box lets you decide how to treat problems. For instance, file fragments usually waste space; click on Free to get it back.



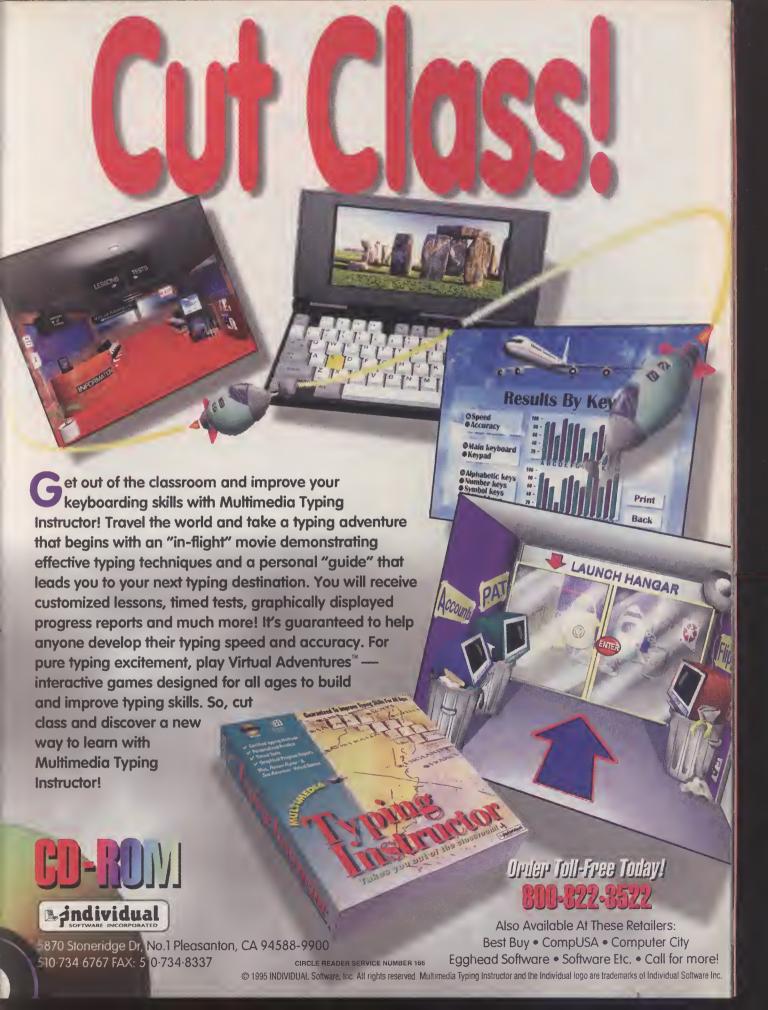
screen. When complete, a report displays

the contents of your newly scanned disk.

ScanDisk Advanced Options 7 × Display summery Lost file (agments △limans C Free C Never @ Cony nt to files Only if errors found Log file Check files for @ Replace log Thyalid file names C. Append to log Invalid dates and times C No log Cross-linked files Check host drive first C. Qelete @ Meke copies C. Ignore

ScanDisk Results - Dos (C:) ScanDisk did not find any errors on this drive. 538,607,616 bytes total disk space 0 bytes in bad sectors 6,471,680 bytes in 392 folders 15,024,128 bytes in 122 hidden files 351,272,960 bytes in 3,967 user files 165,838,848 bytes available on disk 16,384 bytes in each allocation unit 32,874 total allocation units on disk 10,122 available allocation units

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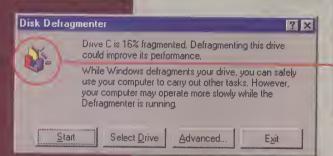
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## Disk Defragmenter

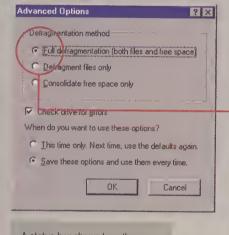
Launch Disk Defragmenter by clicking on Start, then select Programs, Accessories, System Tools and Disk Defragmenter. Choose the drive you want to defrag.



To defrag or not to defrag? Disk Defragmenter tells you when defragging can improve performance. A drive that's more than 10 percent fragmented is usually a likely candidate for the process.

indows 95 picked up one of Windows 3.1's bad habits: It haphazardly scatters the contents of new files in whatever blocks of free hard disk space it finds. PC performance suffers when you retrieve files that have been broken up this way: Fortuuately, Windows 95's Disk Defragmenter lets you correct the problem; the utility puts all the pieces of segmented files back together again, speeding up your hard disk activity.

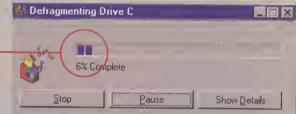
Disk
Defragmenter
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pieces of files
scattered
around the
hard disk to
improve
overall
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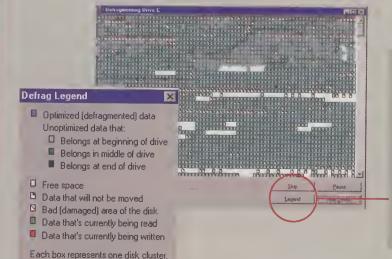


Click on Advanced to choose a defrag method. The default setting is Full, which lines up all file pieces next to each other and puts all free space at the end of the disk.

A status bar shows how the defragging process is proceeding. If you want more information, click on Show Details.

Close





Now you can see the segments of your hard disk represented as colorful boxes. Click on Legend to learn, for instance, that the light-blue boxes represent data that belongs at the beginning of the hard disk. After you've defragged, you should notice that your files open more quickly and also save faster.



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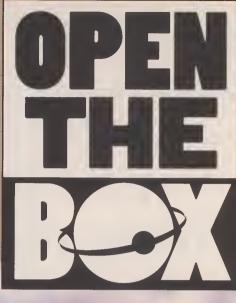


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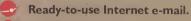
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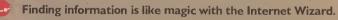
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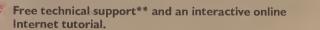
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## **DriveSpace**

unning a little low on your hard drive space? Small wonder-vou've probably been packing it tight with new Windows 95 programs while clinging to some Windows 3.1 favorites. The good news is you don't hare to rush out and buy a bigger hard drive. With Wiudows 95's DriveSpace, you can make room for an expanding library of software programs and data. This disk compression utility can double your storage spacea neat trick that squeezes extra life from your formerly squeezed drive.

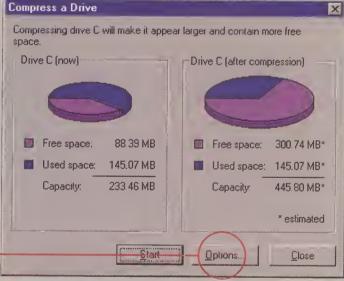
If you didn't activate the DriveSpace utility when you installed Windows 95, just click on the Add/Remove Programs icon in the Control Panel, choose the Windows Setup tab, and then click on the checkbox next to the Disk Tools item.

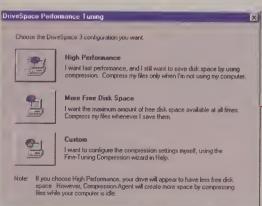
Once DriveSpace is installed, click on the Start button, and select Programs, Accessories and System Tools. Then click on DriveSpace. Choose Drive from the menu bar and click on Compress.



Using **DriveSpace** can double the available storage space on your hard drive.

A pie chart will show you how much free space you'll gain by compression. Click on Start if you're satisfied with the projection; if not, click on Options to change the amount of free space.





DriveSpace 3 in the optional Microsoft Plus package compresses up to 50 percent more than DriveSpace. (DriveSpace 3 replaces DriveSpace and is accessed the same way.) It also provides more options.

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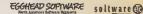
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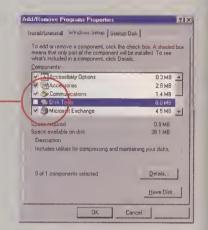
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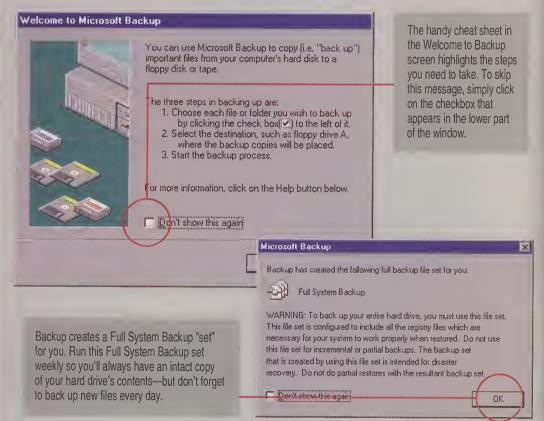
## Backup

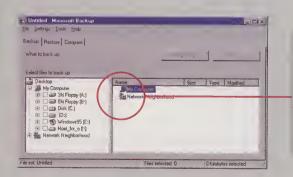
ou't wait until you've accidentally erased a file or lost all your important information in a hard drive crash to learn the value of backing up. With Windows 95, all you need are extra floppies—or a backup device such as a tape drive—to eusure you'll always be able to lay your hands on a secure copy of your vital information.

Install Backup by clicking on Start, then select Settings and Control Panel. Double-click on the Add/Remove Programs icon, then click on the Windows Setup tab. From here, click on Disk Tools, then on the Details button. Click on the checkbox next to the Backup item. Once Backup is installed, click on Start again, then select Programs, Accessories. System Tools and Backup.



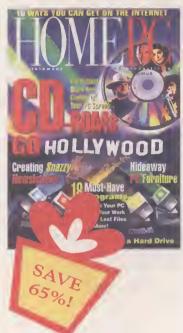
Windows 95's Backup utility makes it easy to safeguard all your important data.





To back up only certain files or drives, click on the Backup tab, then on the unmarked checkbox next to the appropriate drive or file. To back up specific folders, click on the plus symbol next to the drive in question, then on the checkbox next to each directory. For a full hard drive backup, go to the File menu and open Full System Backup.

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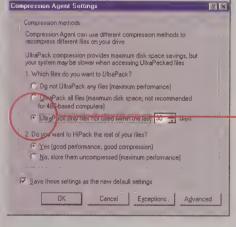
## Compression Agent

indows 95's DriveSpace feature doesn't let vou work on individual files. For that, you'll need the Compression Agent found in the Windows 95 add-on program, Microsoft Plus, which lets you designate particular files for a greater or lesser degree of compression. (You save more disk space using the highest levels, but files also take longer to open.) To use the Compression Agent, you must upgrade to DriveSpace 3, which comes in the Plus package.

The Compression Agent UltraPack option offers the highest level of compression, followed by HiPack. Click on Settings to take your pick. To get to the screen, click on Start, then choose Programs, Accessories, System Tools and Compression Agent.

you specify This might you have not run Comp	compresses your files acco take a long time, especial pression Agent in a while. Compression Agent at any completed	ly on a large drive or if	Pause
New compression format	Space gained by increasing compression	Space lost to improve performance	Settings
UltraPack	0 KB	0 KB	
HiPack	57 KB	0 KB	
None	0 KB	0 KB	Parental
Total	57 KB	0 KB	
Increase in Disk space	57 KB		
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The Compression **Agent lets** you exempt particular files from compression for speedier access.



To use the Add Exceptions screen, click

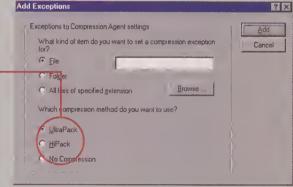
on Add from within the Exceptions dialog

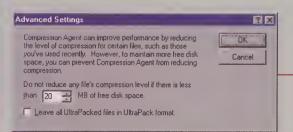
UltraPack, HiPack or No Compression on

box. Then you can designate use of

the file, file type or folder you specify.

For better all-around file access speed, you may decide not to use UltraPack on any files. Or you may choose to use UltraPack only on files that are unused for a specified number of days. Click on Exceptions to alter the general rules set in this screen.





From the Compression Agent screen, click on Settings, then on Advanced to indicate how much free disk space you want to maintain at all times, but be aware that a large amount could compromise system performance.



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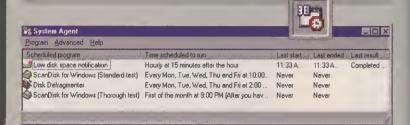
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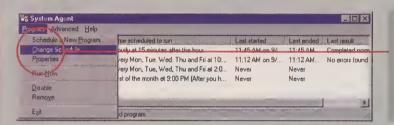


## System Agent

t's great to have Windows 95's tools on hand to help you protect your data and keep your PC functioning in top shape. But with your hectic schedule, it's no surprise that now and then you might forget to defrag your disk or neglect to scan files for errors. That's where Microsoft Plus's System Agent steps in. This utility lets you automate such tasks; they'll run on their own at desiguated times, and you won't have to give them a second thought.

A new icon (shown below) appears on your taskbar when you install the Plus pack's System Agent; just double-click on this icon to launch the program. System Agent runs in the background and will notify you if disk space gets low, and schedule Disk Defragmenter and ScanDisk to run at a preset time without your assistance.



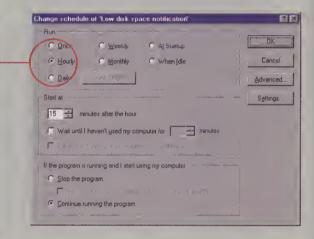


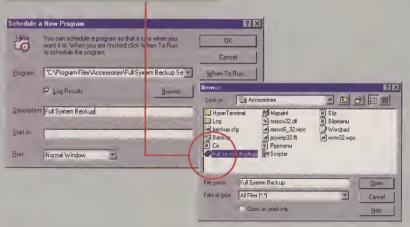
To change a program's default settings, simply click on the program's name, then on Program, and finally on Change Schedule from the drop-down menu.

▶ With System Agent, Windows 95 will perform system maintenance chores such as disk defragging and backup automatically.

From the Change Schedule screen, you can alter various aspects of the default settings. For instance, you may want an activity such as Low Disk Space Notification to occur daily rather than hourly.

Click on Program, then on Schedule a New Program from the System Agent screen to schedule full backup of your hard disk. Click on Browse and select the Full System Backup file in the Accessories folder; System Agent will now automatically run Backup at a time you indicate.





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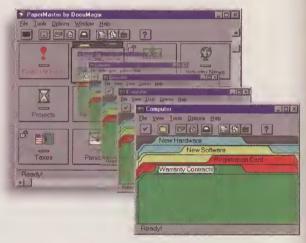
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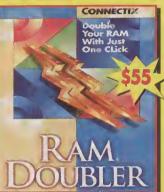
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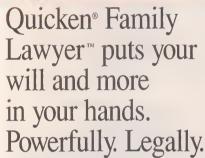




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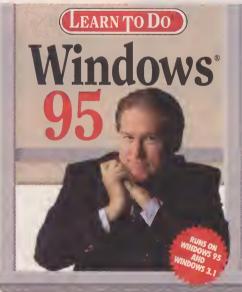
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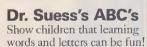
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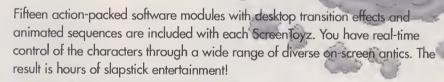
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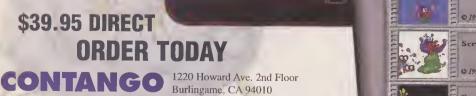
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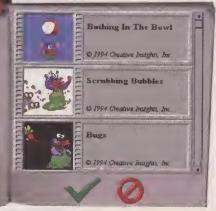
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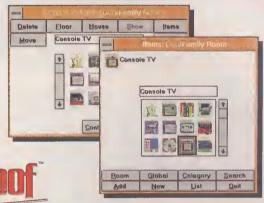




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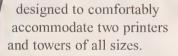
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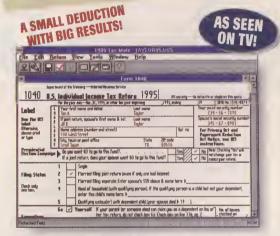
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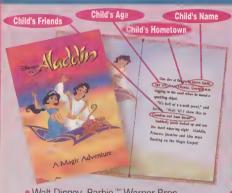
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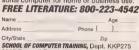
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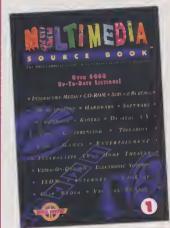
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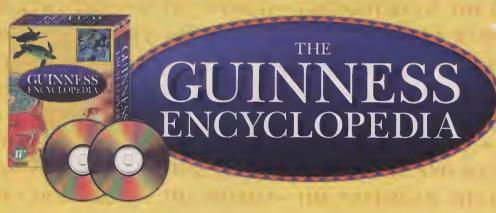
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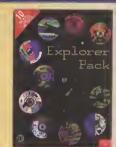
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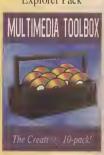
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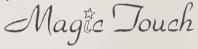
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YOUR ON-LINE TOUR GUIDE

BY JOHN ECKHOUSE

Eye spy. You'd think the Central Intelligence Agency would be the most guarded spot in the nation, but any Tom, Diek or Leonid with access to the Web can now take a tour of its headquarters, which is not open to the public. Let CIA director John Deutch welcome you in text or an audio clip, then snoop around the library, read background facts or link to other intelligence-community sites. Funny, they'll tell you who designed the headquarters and how many square feet it occupies, and they'll show you an aerial photo, but



nowhere do they give the address... World Wide Web (http://www.odci.gov/cia)

Color commentary. Do you miss the fun of coloring? Then drop into Crayola\*Crayola\*Crayola\*Crayola. Seven crayons direct you to fun facts (Binney & Smith makes 5 million crayons a day; the most popular color is blue), and offer some colorful tidbits of Crayola lore and—thank goodness—stain-removal tips. You may also catch a contest; one recent competition offered a \$25,000 prize in two of the



nicest colors in the Crayola box—silver and gold.

World Wide Web (http://www.cray-ola.com/crayola/)

Vaudeville lives. I was born too late to see the crooners and baggy-pants comics who traveled the

vaudeville circuit from about 1875 to 1925, but I'm glad I caught some of their acts at Carl's Vaudeville & Ragtime Show. It's filled with vintage recordings you'd be hard-pressed to find elsewhere. How entertaining is it? If you're going to visit, take a tip from Ada Jones, who sang "Put On Your Slippers, You're In For The Night." World Wide Web (http://www.netrunner.net/~phono/index.htm)

Who is the Cyber Ace? "I'll take The Web for \$500, Alex." If you know what that means, there's no question you'll enjoy Hyper-Jeopardy!—an on-line version of the TV game show where contestants get the answers and have to supply the questions. Confidently, I bet heavily on my ability to handle 10 randomly selected categories, and I made it to Final Hyper-Jeopardy. How'd I do? Alas, the answer is, "He's the game surfer who failed to qualify for Hyper-Jeopardy's Hall of Fame." World Wide Web (http://www.hype.

Living memories. To honor the life of a dearly departed friend, relative or pet, visit The Virtual Memorial Garden, a tasteful area where survivors post tributes to loved ones at no charge. Many are touching, such as the letter to heaven by Kenton Kilmer written after his dad's death, or the remembrance of Sola Castrillo, "the Mother Teresa of the Lower Garden District" in New Orleans.

com/game\_show/)

World Wide Web (http://catless.ncl. ac.uk/Obituary/memorial.html)

**Postal service.** *Omigosh!* You didn't buy Aunt Suzy a birthday card? No sweat; jump to **The Out-Post Network**, pick out a card, add a message, select a fout, and for \$3.75.

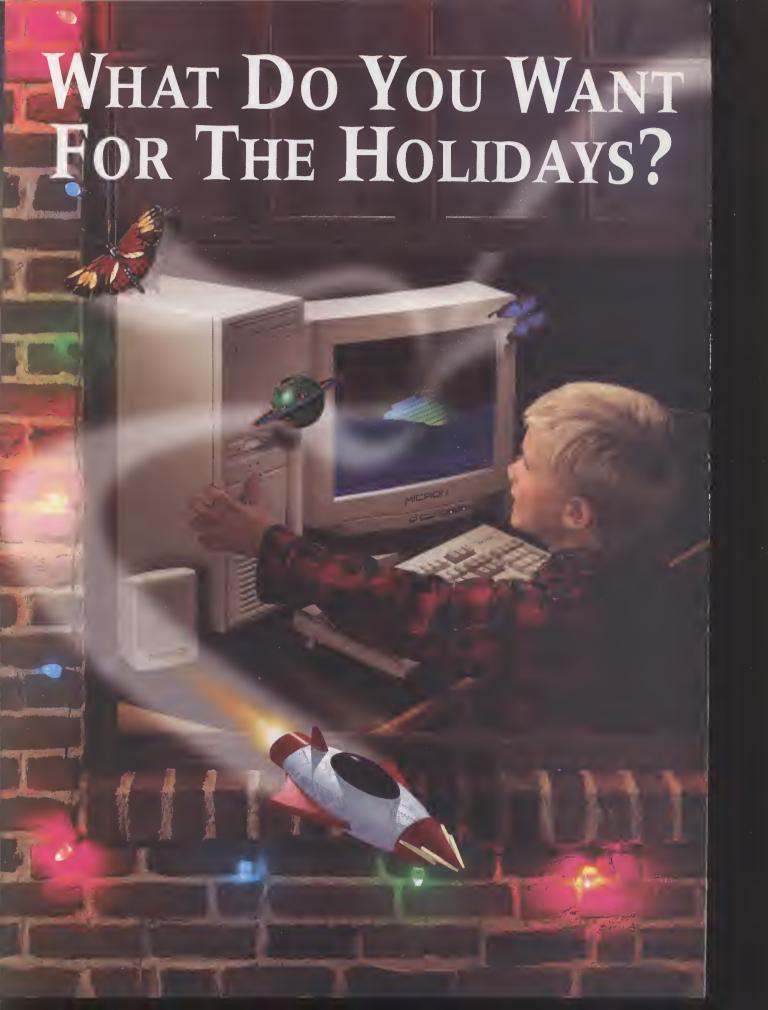
it's in the U.S. mail. The site offers many helpful postal services—and the wacky "virtual vacation": For \$9.95, OutPost sends your friends four real postcards—when we visited

the site, the eards pictured South Dakota locations—over a stretch of two weeks, all bearing your greeting. **World Wide Web** (http://www.outpost.net)



NEW ON AOL! Cyber Ace Road Trip, Fri., Dec. 1, 8 p.m. EST (Keyword: roadtrip). Tour this month's sites with the Cyber Ace! (Requires Windows 3.1 or later, AOL 2.5 including Web browser, and a 9,600-bps or faster modem.

Addresses may change at the providers' discretion. Write johnhpc@aol.com to tell us about your favorite sites, and check our AOL forum for more Cyber Ace tips.



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PC Magazine, April 25, 1995



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